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# RIDPATH'S UNIVERSAL HISTORY

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN, PRIMITIVE CONDITION AND ETHNIC DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE GREAT RACES OF MANKIND, AND OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS IN THE  
EVOLUTION AND PROGRESS OF THE CIVILIZED LIFE AMONG MEN  
AND NATIONS, FROM RECENT AND AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

WITH A PRELIMINARY INQUIRY ON THE TIME, PLACE AND MANNER  
OF THE BEGINNING.

By JOHN CLARK RIDPATH, LL. D.,  
AUTHOR OF A POPULAR HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES, ETC.

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VOLUME IX.

CINCINNATI:  
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To the Memory of  
My Father and Mother

Who on the Rough Frontier of Civilization  
Toiled and Suffered and Died that

Their Children

Might Inherit the Promise



## PREFACE TO VOLUMES IX AND X.

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WITHIN the present century the motives for writing History have been greatly intensified. First of all, the vision of the historian has been considerably widened by the enlargement of geographical knowledge and the establishment of the hitherto uncertain limits of cities and states. By this means not a few of the puzzling and contradictory aspects of the old-time annals have been brought into clearer light and truer proportion. More particularly in Ancient History has accurate geographical information contributed to the completeness and perspicuity of the narrative.

The rectification of Chronology, also, has gone forward with rapid strides, and the result has been no less than the writing anew of whole paragraphs in the earlier chapters of human history. If to this we add the splendid achievements in the department of Archæology, in deciphering the hitherto mute records of antiquity, and in interpreting the significance of the architectural monuments so abundant in most of the countries where civilization has flourished, we shall find a large, even an imperative, motive for reviewing and re-writing the records of the Ancient World.

It is, however, most of all, the Scientific spirit of the nineteenth century which has demanded, at the hands of the historian, an additional guaranty for the accuracy of his work. This spirit is abroad in all the world, and prevails most of all in the highest departments of human thought and activity. It has not hesitated to demand that History shall become a science. It has challenged or rejected the value of all historical writings that are not pervaded with the scientific method and modeled on the inductive plan. All this is well; the historian must scrutinize the foundations of his work and the validity of his structure.

It is to motives such as these that the great historical works of our century owe their origin. But for such reasons, Wilkinson, Ebers, Rawlinson, Duncker, and Curtius had never written; and the world would still be blindly following the unsifted stories of old. Thus much may be said, then, as to the general reasons for writing History.

The more particular motive which the Author of the present work has to offer to the public for undertaking the composition of a book so comprehensive as the title indicates, is this: A desire to bring within the reach of the average reader a concise and accurate summary of the principal events in the career of the human race. The historical works produced in our century have nearly all been in the nature of *special studies*, limited in their scope to a particular epoch. The result has been that the works in question are so elaborate in detail and so recondite in method, that the common reader has neither courage to undertake nor time to complete them. Before a single topic can be mastered, he finds himself lost in a labyrinth. The synthesis of different periods, treated by different authors, seems impossible; he turns in discouragement from the task; and to him the history of the past remains a sealed fountain.

It has thus come to pass that the average citizen, who, in the United States at least, is expected to have accurate general views on historical questions, may reasonably plead in bar that the historians, by not considering the limits of his time and opportunity, have put the required knowledge beyond his reach.

Be it far from me to say aught in disparagement of the learned labors of our great historians. They have fairly deserved the plaudits of mankind. It can not be denied, however, that the best of our recent historical works are, by excess of learning and the dissertative disposition of the writers, quite



incommensurate with the demands, and, I may say, the needs of the common reader.

It has been my purpose, in the preparation of these volumes, to *popularize* the subject without losing sight of the dignity and importance of the historian's office. The *People* are as much entitled to accurate information, concisely and graphically conveyed, as scholars are entitled to elaborate dissertation. It is a most pernicious error to admit that a true epitome of History can be hastily and easily prepared. Such a work, when conscientiously undertaken, requires the greatest care and the highest skill in execution.

In preparing the present work, I have freely availed myself of the best and most recent authorities. The names of Wilkinson, Brugsch, Bunsen, Ebers, Duncker, Rawlinson, Smith, Curtius, Grote, Niebuhr, Falke, Mommsen, and Von Ranke will suggest the secondary sources which have been relied upon; and these names are the guarantees for the fundamental accuracy of the narrative.

As to the style adopted in the following pages, as well as the general views expressed, and the method of treatment employed in the various parts—these are the Author's own. It has been my hope and aim in this work to relate the HISTORY OF THE WORLD in such a manner as to bring the vast record within a manageable limit, so that every reader who will, may obtain, at a moderate expense, and master, with a moderate endeavor, the better parts of the history of the past.

A word of explanation may be required respecting the arrangement of the earlier parts of the present work. Instead of beginning, as do most of the treatises on Ancient History, with the Chaldean and Assyrian monarchies, I have chosen to begin with Egypt, tracing, first of all, the history of that country down to the time of its subjection to the Persians; then transferring the scene to Mesopotamia, and following thereafter the natural course of events from the Euphrates to the Tiber—from Babylon to Rome. The choice of the valley of the Nile, rather than the valley of the Tigris, as the place of beginning, has been determined by chronological considerations and the true sequence of events.

A brief explanation is also demanded respecting the line of division between Ancient and Modern History. Instead of selecting the downfall of the Western Empire of the Romans (A. D. 476) as the line of demarkation between the world of the ancients and our own, I have taken the overthrow of the Greek Empire by the conquest of Constantinople (A. D. 1453), as what may be properly called the death of Antiquity. True it is that Modern Europe was already in the nascent state before the final destruction of the old historical forces; and for that reason the attention of the reader will be recalled after the overthrow of the Eastern Empire, by the span of a thousand years, to the story of the Barbarian Nations, which may be fairly regarded as the opening scene in the drama of modern times.

It is also proper to add a word respecting the use of the term CYCLOPEDIA in the title of these volumes. Popularly speaking, the word is limited to the discussion of topics alphabetically arranged; but neither etymology nor better usage in literature indicates any such limitation of meaning. I have chosen to use the word in its truer sense, as implying simply a discussion of *the whole circle* of the subject under consideration.

As it respects the illustrative part of the present work, it may be said that the aim has been kept constantly in view to make the illustrations contribute to a ready understanding and apt appreciation of the text. Great care has been taken in the preparation of the maps with which, by the liberality of the publishers, the following pages are so copiously interspersed. The cuts and drawings have all been selected and arranged in such relation with the text that the one shall illustrate the other.

I trust that the work, the plan and motive of which I have thus briefly summarized, may, in the present Revised and Enlarged Edition, meet with the same cordial reception at the hands of the public which has been extended to the author's other essays in historical literature. More particularly am I anxious that these volumes may prove to be worthy of the appreciation and praise of my countrymen, to whose candor and charitable criticism I now surrender the fruit of my labors.

J. C. R.

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## INTRODUCTION TO VOLUMES IX AND X.



CIVILIZATION was first planted in the great river valleys of the East. The upland, hill-country, and plain reacted less favorably upon the faculties of man than did the dark alluvium richly spread along the banks of overflowing streams. The exuberance of the soil thus formed, and the copious and perennial supply of water, gave great advantages to those primitive tribes of men who chose for their homes the valley-lands rather than the mountain slopes and plains. Accordingly we find that, at the suggestion of Nature, the first progressive communities were organized by the river-banks, on the fertile deposits made by the overflow of turbid waters as they spread out to meet the sea.

In such a locality the first well-developed society of which history is called to take account was established. Where the River Nile bears northwards to the Mediterranean his swollen waters, annually yellowed with the rich *clbris* of the mountains, the oldest nation of antiquity was planted. The secular history of mankind properly begins with EGYPT.

The second region to which the attention of the historian is directed is similar to the first. The valleys of the Euphrates and the Tigris, occupying the depression between the Syrian plateau and the table-land of Persia, furnish a situation specially favorable to the development of great kingdoms. Here the incentives and instigations to a civilized life are scarcely inferior to those of Egypt; and accordingly we find that, at a very remote period, man availed himself of the natural advantages of the lowlands lying along the two great rivers, and planted powerful empires on their banks.

In this fruitful and well-watered region no fewer than three of the great monarchies of the ancient world—CHALDEA, ASSYRIA, BABYLONIA—rose, flourished, and fell. It will therefore be natural, after tracing the vicissitudes of Egyptian history, down to the time of the

conquest of that country by the Persians, to turn to the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates, and narrate, in chronological order, the histories of the three great kingdoms founded on the banks of those rivers. The Second, Third, and Fifth Books of Ancient History will thus be occupied with an account of the Chaldean, Assyrian, and Babylonian monarchies.

In an exhaustive account of the early movements of the human race, we should next enter the valley of the Indus. Here we should see the oldest branch of the Aryan family developing into the civilized condition, until, by the separation of the Iranic tribes on the west, a new dominion is established in the hill-countries of MEDIA and PERSIA. We should observe the growth of this power, warlike and aggressive from the first, until attracted by the wealth and emboldened by the effeminacy of the Mesopotamians, the army of Cyaxares captures Nineveh and makes it the capital of the Median dominions. The Fourth Book will be occupied with the history of the Median Empire, down to its overthrow by Cyrus the Great.

With this event we may properly pause to observe the revival of BABYLONIA under Nabopolassar and his successors. We shall see a new power arising on the ruins of ancient Chaldea more glorious than she, but destined to a brief career. The Lower or Later Empire of the Babylonians will occupy a few of the most brilliant and interesting chapters in the annals of antiquity.

The collapse of Babylonia under the blows of Cyrus will take the reader again beyond the Zagros and open to him the records of the MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE. Here he shall note the growth, culmination, and decline of the greatest power ever planted by the Aryan race in Asia, and at its close shall mark with admiration the triumph of the freedom-loving Hellenes over the consolidated despotism established by Cyrus and his successors.

But before transferring his historical station from Asia to Europe, the reader may

well pause to observe the rise and expansion of a great native dynasty on the ruins of Persia. After a few striking evolutions, and the lapse of a brief period, a new Asiatic dominion, known as PARTHIA, springs up as the representative State of the Iranic nations. With this Power the successors of Alexander contend in desultory and fruitless wars until what time the shadow of Rome, extending across Asia, reaches the Euphrates. Then, for two and a half centuries, the Mistress of the World shall find a barrier to her progress in the long lines of Parthian cavalry lying in the desert horizon of Mesopotamia. The Seventh Book will be devoted to the history of the PARTHIAN EMPIRE.

The next change of scene will be to the GRECIAN ARCHIPELAGO. In the islands of the Ægean, and around the adjacent coasts of Asia Minor and Hellas, we shall see the Hellenic tribes establishing themselves and laying the foundations of the most brilliant civilization of the Ancient World. For a while Sparta, with her warrior caste, and Athens, with her intellectual activity, will occupy the foreground. The hosts of Persia will be precipitated upon the small but vigorous democracies of the Greeks, only to be destroyed by their valor. Macedonia shall then achieve, partly by prowess and partly by intrigue, what the Persians could not accomplish—the subjection of the Grecian States. The Eighth Book will contain an account of the rise of the Hellenic colonies, the glory of the Greeks, and their final subordination by the Macedonians.

In the next scene the Illyrian Greeks of the North, led by Philip and Alexander, shall subvert the democratic liberties of Hellas, visit Asia with retribution, overthrow the Medo-Persian Empire, and carry the Greek language to the banks of the Indus. Then, as suddenly, the great fabric reared by Macedonian genius shall collapse and disappear. The Ninth Book will recount the history of MACEDONIA, from the rise of the kingdom to the decline of the States established by the successors of Alexander the Great, in Asia.

In addition to these general aspects which the history of the Ancient World presents, certain minor considerations will, from time to time, claim our attention. Several countries in Asia Minor, Syria, on the northern coast

of Africa, and in Europe, will at intervals demand attention and be made the subjects of special chapters in proper connection with the general narrative. In this way the history of Lydia and the other kingdoms of Asia Minor, Phœnicia, Israel, and the Greek colonies will be presented.

Summing up the results of this brief general survey of Ancient History, we find the subject presenting itself under nine principal heads, or divisions, as follows:

I. BOOK FIRST.—THE EGYPTIAN ASCENDENCY. From the founding of the Kingdom of Memphis, B. C. 3892, to the conquest of the country by the Persians, B. C. 525.

II. BOOK SECOND.—THE CHALDEAN ASCENDENCY. From the establishment of the Cushite Kingdoms on the lower Euphrates, B. C. (about) 2400, to the subjection of Babylonia by the Assyrians, B. C. 1300.

III. BOOK THIRD.—THE ASSYRIAN ASCENDENCY. From the establishment of the Assyrian Empire, by the conquests of Tiglath-Adar, B. C. 1300, to the destruction of Nineveh, B. C. 625.

IV. BOOK FOURTH.—THE MEDIAN ASCENDENCY. From the origin of that kingdom to its overthrow by Cyrus the Great, B. C. 558.

V. BOOK FIFTH.—THE BABYLONIAN ASCENDENCY. From the revival of the Lower Empire under Nabopolassar, B. C. 625, to the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, B. C. 538.

VI. BOOK SIXTH.—THE PERSIAN ASCENDENCY. From the founding of the Empire of Achæmenes, B. C. 660, to the battle of Arbela, B. C. 331.

VII. BOOK SEVENTH.—THE PARTHIAN ASCENDENCY. From the revolt and accession of Arsaces I., B. C. 256, to the destruction of the Empire, A. D. 226.

VIII. BOOK EIGHTH.—THE HELLENIC ASCENDENCY. From the establishment of Greek colonies in Hellas, in the mythological ages, to the death of Alexander the Great, B. C. 323.

IX. BOOK NINTH.—THE MACEDONIAN ASCENDENCY. From the founding of the kingdom by Perdiccas I., B. C. —, to the absorption of the last of the fragments of Alexander's dominions by the Roman Empire, B. C. 146.

In this order the History of the Ancient World will be presented in the following pages.

# RIDPATH'S UNIVERSAL HISTORY

## VOLUME IX.

BOOK I. —EGYPT

BOOK II. —CHALDAEA

BOOK III. —ASSYRIA

BOOK IV.—MEDIA

BOOK V. —BABYLONIA

BOOK VI.—PERSIA











Painted by Ferdinand Keller.

Etched by Wm. St. J. Harpor.

AN EGYPTIAN PRINCESS.





## Book First.

# EGYPT.

## CHAPTER I.—THE COUNTRY.



THE oldest civilization began on that continent which seems to be least favorable to the progress of the human race. Africa lies under the equator, sun-scorched and blasted. In the broadest part, through fifteen degrees of latitude, the country is a desert, the upheaved bed of a sea—more impassable than the trackless deep. The whole of the southern portion of the continent is occupied with a vast plateau which, descending to the north, sinks at intervals into jagged hills and anon into a tangle of impenetrable forests, wild and gloomy, where, through untold ages, the exuberant forces of Nature have triumphed over the genius and cowed the spirit of man.

The African coasts, though washed on three sides with oceans, are nowhere indented with great bays and inlets. Near the shores the mountains rise, and through these the rivers, gathering their waters in the table-lands of the interior, burst out in cataracts, make a short and precipitous course to the foot-hills, and then sluggishly traverse the narrow strip of

low and marshy land lying between the hill-country and the sea.

NORTHERN AFRICA is a mountainous district occupying the space between the Sahara and the Mediterranean. Near the western extreme the peaks of the Atlas range rise to the region of perpetual snow. Further to the east the mountains sink down into hills and finally terminate in the plain of Barca, which is scarcely a thousand feet above the level of the sea. The northern slope, between the Atlas and the Mediterranean, is occupied with ranges of hills, deep valleys—sometimes cleft by mountain streams and sometimes dry and barren—plains of greater or less extent, and morasses and flats, characterized by the luxuriant vegetation peculiar to the well-watered portions of Africa.

At the eastern extreme of this northern slope, looking out towards the Mediterranean, opens the VALLEY OF THE NILE, the largest in Africa and most fruitful in the world. It occupies the north-eastern corner of the continent, being separated from Arabia by a narrow strip of sea and guarded on the west by the fastnesses of the desert. Through this

valley, from south to north, flows the great river, famous from the earliest epoch in history and tradition. Here, on either side of the river, stretching almost from the Tropic of Cancer to the Mediterranean, lies the narrow belt of black alluvium known as EGYPT.

From the great lakes lying under the equator; from the spurs of the table-lands beyond the equator; from the slopes of mountains whose gorges are filled with glaciers and summits are covered with snow, the western branch of the river of Egypt, known as the White Nile or Bahr-el-Abiad, gathers its waters. Plunging down from the highlands, it reaches a country of swamps and morasses; infinite jungles; thickets of bamboo, tamarisks, sycamores; humid and sunless forests, where zebras, antelopes, and elephants abound; muddy banks covered with reeds, through which the hippopotamus heaves his huge bulk and crocodiles slide with a lazy plunge. Further on in its course the river enters a region of grassy plains, interspersed with tropical forests, and occasionally broken into hills.

Far to the south-east, out of the table-lands of Abyssinia, from the slopes and rivulets of the range called Samen, the Bahr-el-Azrak or Blue Nile takes its rise, and descends with a smaller volume of waters to join the White Nile at Khartoom, in  $15^{\circ} 30' N$ . From this point onward, through several degrees of latitude, the ranges of hills lie almost at right angles to the course of the river, which breaks through the successive barriers in a series of cataracts, the last being at Syene.

The country on either hand has now become a desert, and begins to take on the peculiar character of Egypt. The river at the last cataract is a thousand yards in width. From this point to the sea is a distance of seven hundred and fifty miles; and in all this course the Nile receives no tributary of any importance. From Syene to the Mediterranean stretches a vast fissure in the rocky structure of the continent; and in the bottom of this fissure, more or less winding and irregular in its course, flows calmly and majestically the great river which is the fundamental fact of Egypt.

Out of the rock-bound depression through which it flows the Nile has created a narrow

valley, which for fecundity of vegetation has no equal in the world. On the west the valley is protected through its whole extent by the range of hills, which, standing back but a few miles from the river and parallel with its course, form an effectual barrier against the drifting sands of the desert. Against these hills, rising from three hundred to five hundred feet in height, the clouds of dust which blow up from the blasted wastes of Libya and Barca beat in vain. Only now and then, where the hills press close to the river, do the blinding storms from the west fling a thin shower of sand into the valley.

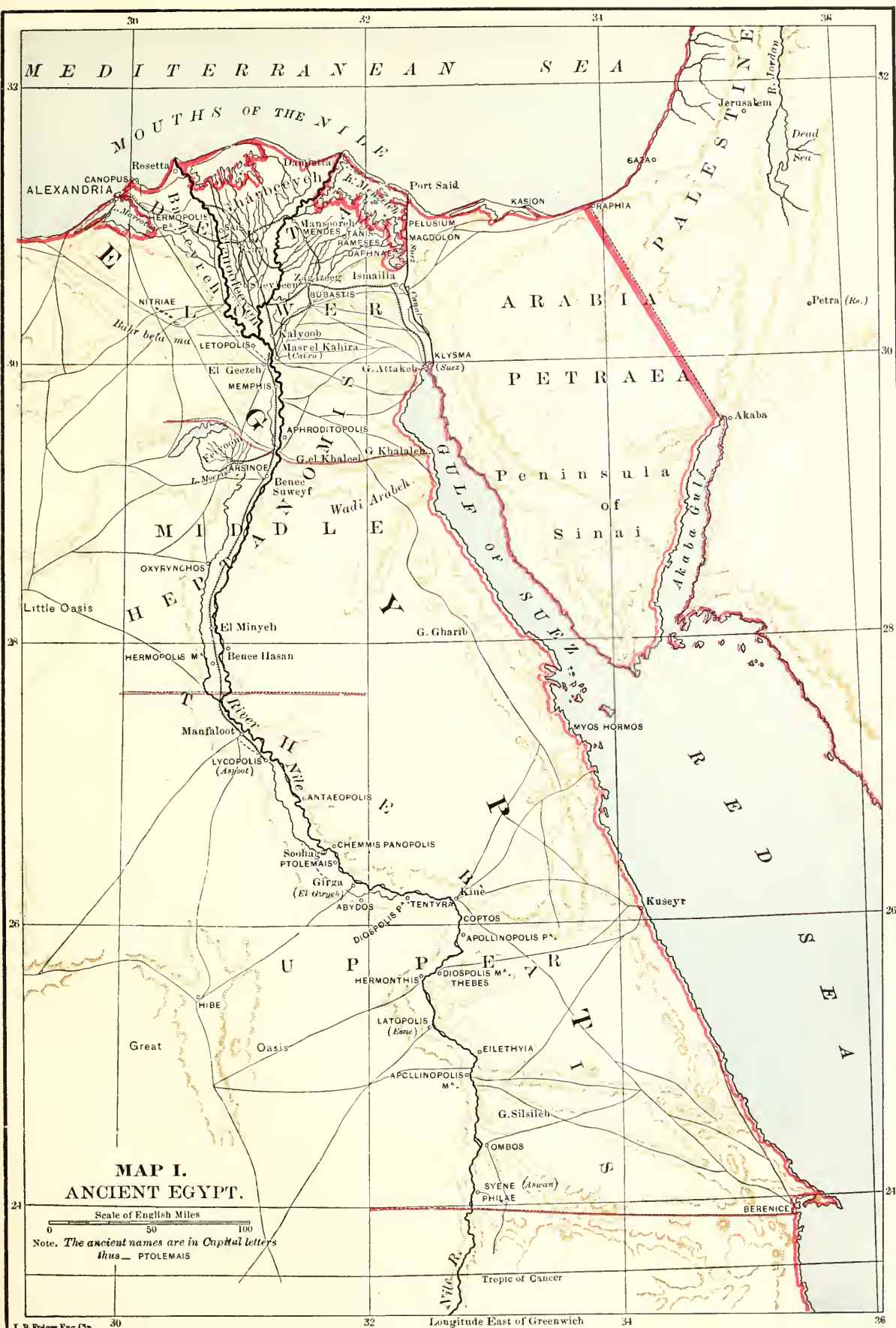
On the eastern side of the river a similar rampart of hills stands from north to south between the bottoms and the desert flats and sand-dunes which border the Red Sea. But on this side of the river the valley is much narrower than on the west. In some localities the eastern range rises abruptly from the water's edge, and in only a few places does the river divide impartially the verdant strip through which it flows.

The greatest breadth of cultivatable land on the eastern bank of the river is about three miles, and on the western bank about ten miles; but the average breadth on either side is not so great. About seventy-five miles from the Mediterranean the Nile divides into two branches, which flowing, the one in a north-easterly and the other in a north-westerly course, inclose between them and the sea the triangular district called the DELTA.

The climate of Egypt is peculiar to itself. In no other country do the same conditions exist. The temperature hardly varies as much as fifty degrees during the year. For eight months of the twelve the heat is tempered by refreshing winds. In the upper parts of Egypt clouds are never seen; mist, rain, and snow are impossible. Further down the valley an occasional fleecy cloud floats silently southward. In the Delta the sea-breezes from the north not infrequently bring on their dripping wings the benevolent gift of showers.

Egypt is divided into three principal parts. The first division, called LOWER EGYPT, extends from the Mediterranean to latitude twenty-nine degrees and twenty minutes north.











MURCHISON WATERFALL.—UPPER NILE.

The second division, more recent than the other two, reaches from the southern limit of Lower Egypt to latitude twenty-seven degrees and thirty-eight minutes, and is called **MIDDLE EGYPT**. The third division extends from the southern boundary of Middle Egypt to the ancient city of Philæ, in latitude twenty-four degrees, and is known as **UPPER EGYPT**. The relative extent of these three great divisions of the country, as well as the course of the



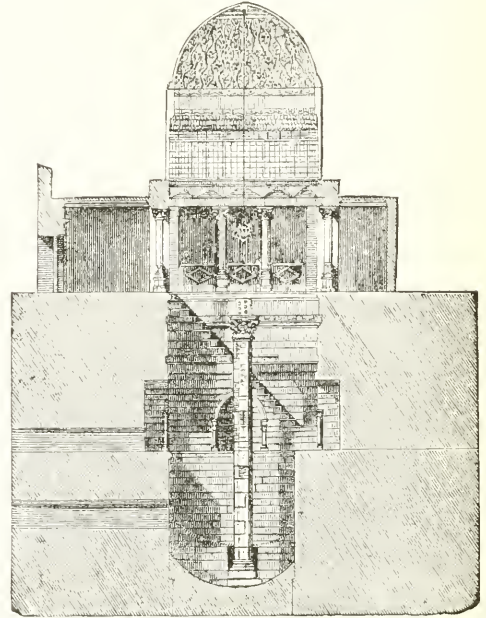
river and the shape of the valley, may be accurately traced on the accompanying map.

In addition to the three major divisions of the country, and for convenience of civil administration, ancient Egypt was divided into provinces called *NOMES*. Mention of such divisions has been found as early as the First Dynasty, and in the subsequent inscriptions the name of *hesp*, or Nome, is constantly recurring. The number of the provinces differed at different periods, the lists of Herodotus and Diodorus being in several places incomplete or contradictory. The standard number of Nomes, according to Brugsch, was forty-two; and there is little doubt that the forty-two judges who constituted the High Court of Egypt, as well as the myth of the forty-two gods who presided over the tribunal of the dead, may be accounted for on the supposition of one judge for each Nome, called to a general council. Each of the Nomes had for its center a city and a temple, and here was established the seat of civil government for the district.

The possibilities of Egypt are all traceable to a single striking phenomenon—the annual inundation of the Nile. About the time of the summer solstice, when the sun looking down vertically upon the ice-gorges in the Abyssinian mountains melts the deposits of snow and pours them in yellow cascades to join their waters in the two great arms of the river, the first pulsations of the flood are felt in Egypt. Where the White Nile receives the Blue at Khartoom, the initial symptoms of the rise are sometimes felt as early as April; but the true swell of the waters does not generally begin until the middle or latter part of June. Then the volume of the river begins to increase; the channel fills to overflow; the current grows turbid, widens and deepens; by the middle of August the inundation proper pours into the valley, and by the autumnal equinox the flood is at its height. Then, after the maximum has been reached, the waters begin to recede.

The banks of the river are, in most places, higher than the adjacent valley-lands. To prevent a violent overflow, huge canals are cut into the bottoms at an angle with

the course of the stream; and, during the recession of the flood, the mouths of these canals are closed and the retreat of the waters thus retarded. Almost five months elapse before the river finds his old bed, so that during nearly three-fourths of the year the manifestations of the swell are noticeable in Egypt.



NILOMETER.

The annual flood is by no means uniform throughout the whole course of the river. The greatest rise is in Upper, and the smallest in Lower Egypt. At the first cataract the inundation rises forty feet above low water. At Thebes, thirty-six feet is the maximum; at Cairo, twenty-five feet; while at the Damietta and Rosetta mouths of the Nile the average rise is only four feet. The volume of the annual overflow is, however, by no means uniform. In some years the flood is twice as great as in others. If the swell does not exceed eighteen or twenty feet the rise is regarded as scanty; from twenty to twenty-four feet is considered a meager Nile; from twenty-four to twenty-seven feet, a good Nile; while a flood of more than twenty-eight feet becomes destructive and dangerous. In a few rare instances there is no rise at all, which condition is a sure precursor of distress and famine. During the reign of the Caliph Mustansir a period of seven years (A. D. 1066–



1073) elapsed in which there was no inundation. A slight rise is sure to occasion dearth; and on the other hand a great flood, in addition to the usual disasters attending high waters, entails various infectious diseases, especially murrain and the plague. It thus happens that a variation of only a few feet in the annual overflow of the river produces the most important results.

From time immemorial the yearly prosperity of Egypt has been estimated by the peri-

in appearance at different seasons of the year. During the inundation the stream is exceedingly turbid. Afterwards for about two weeks it assumes a greenish tinge, owing to the presence of large quantities of vegetable matter brought down from the tropics. Again it takes the turbid appearance, and retains it during the period of subsidence, until the winter months, when the waters are comparatively clear. At all times, when not agitated, the earthy sediment is quickly deposited,



COPTIC WOMEN FORDING THE NILE (MODERN).

odic overflow of the Nile. At Er-Rodah, near Cairo, in Lower Egypt; at Memphis, a little further south; and at Thebes, graduated pillars, called Nilometers, register the height of the annual inundation, and from this the annual estimates are made.

The current of the Nile is sluggish, the average velocity being at low water no more than two miles per hour, and during the flood not exceeding three or three and a-half miles. The water of the river differs greatly

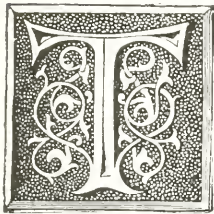
and, except during the green stage of the flood, the water is pure and sweet.

Egypt is the "Gift of the Nile"—so called from antiquity. As the waters of the annual overflow subside, a film of the richest alluvium is deposited over the whole valley. No artificial methods of renewing the soil can equal what nature has here gratuitously provided. True it is that the annual layer, contrary to popular belief, is exceedingly thin, aggregating only about four and a-half inches in

a century; but, notwithstanding the small amount of matter actually deposited, the soil of the valley, lying for so long a period under the fertilizing water, comes forth after each inundation fresh and fecund as though still warm from creation. Such a soil no cultivation can exhaust—no abuse destroy. The cooling of the air by the immense body of water which rolls through the valley, and the complete saturation of the earth with the flood in the very crisis of summer, when all

the circumjacent countries are burned to a crisp, constitute the two essential advantages which Egypt has immemorially enjoyed. To these facts she owes her preëminence in ancient history. Notwithstanding her rainless climate, and the gleaming blue of her cloudless skies, Egypt, nourished and sustained, watered and cooled, by the munificence of her solitary river, offered to the primitive race of men the most luxuriant and beautiful home of all the habitable globe.

## CHAPTER II.—THE PEOPLE.



THE origin of the ancient Egyptians is involved in the same obscurity that clouds the early history of most races. One by one the ancient peoples emerge from the shadows, but the source of their emergence is hidden in the vapor and mist of the dawn. Races, like men, have no recollection of their own infancy and childhood.

It is now generally agreed that at a very remote period an aboriginal population, feeble in numbers and prowess, was displaced in Egypt by bands of immigrants from Asia; that these immigrants belonged to a white race, and that they were *not* Semites or Negroes. It appears that the incursive tribe came in full force, and that the invaders were not modified to any considerable degree by the influence of the original population of the country. The early inhabitants of the Nile valley and of the district drained by its tributaries were as clearly distinguished from the well-known Nigritian types of Africa as were any of the white peoples of Asia.

The motives for the coming of these white Asiatics into North-eastern Africa were the same which usually induce tribal migrations—namely, overcrowding in the original seats of the tribe, the predatory and adventurous impulse, and those strange cosmic influences which draw all the tendrils of animal and

vegetable life towards the West. The law appears to be world-wide in its operation.

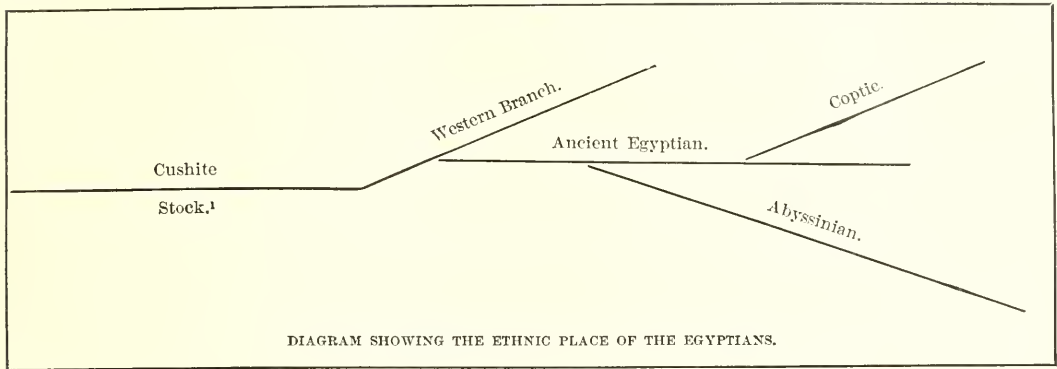
Be this as it may, there is no reason to doubt that the immigrant tribes that peopled Egypt were thrown into that country by the same impulses which in successive ages carried into Europe the Celtic, the Hellenic, and the Teutonic races; and the influence of the aborigines in forming the new nationality of Egypt was not greater than that of the primitive peoples north of the Mediterranean upon the invaders of those countries. Doubtless the principal motive which impelled the Asiatic bands towards Egypt was conquest, and the course of their movements from the lower part of the valley southward is distinctly marked. The record of their advances through Lower, Middle, and Upper Egypt is unmistakable, and the evidence thus afforded gives a complete refutation to the theory that the ancient inhabitants of the country were the descendants of the Ethiopians. On the contrary, it is definitely established that the valley of the Nile and the greater part of the northern coast of Africa, as far south as the hill-country of Abyssinia, were settled by a people who in color, language, and institutions were wholly different from the black races of the interior.

It is probable, therefore, that the ancient Egyptians were, ethnically considered, a branch of that Cushite family of Asiatic origin which at a very remote epoch occupied and civilized the lower valley of the Tigris



and the Euphrates. The ethnic position of the Egyptians will accordingly be given as in the annexed diagram:

to about the year 1500 B. C., a scene is depicted in which the god Horus is represented as leading a company of sixteen persons in



It must not be supposed, however, that the invaders of the valley of the Nile were uninfluenced in their primitive character by previous contact with other races. The language spoken by the ancient Egyptians gives unmistakable evidence of intercourse between them and both the Semitic and Aryan branches of the human family. But the ancient speech of Egypt was a distinct tongue, and the attempt to classify it as a Semitic dialect is as erroneous as to make the English language an offshoot of Latin, or German a derivative of Greek.

From the sculptures and inscriptions it is certain that as many as four races of men were known to the Egyptians—three besides themselves. In a tomb at Thebes, belonging

groups of four, each group belonging to a different race. In the company the Egyptian, Semitic, Nigritian, and Aryan types of mankind are delineated with a clearness not to be mistaken; so that both before and after the original conquest of the Nile valley by the people called Egyptians, it is certain that they were ethnically modified by contact with other races.

The Asiatic invaders of Egypt, upon their entrance into the valley, found themselves in the midst of strange surroundings. Their previous life was in no manner *suited* to the new condition. The vocation of the hunter, the wild flight of the nomad, and the vigil of the shepherd were no longer practicable. Instead of the open plains and boundless deserts, they found here a narrow oasis, green, cool, and luxuriant. Here were no forests. Here were no storms of rain. Here nature restored the soil with her own riches, and yielded her abundance without labor. The first result of the new situation was that the immigrants abandoned the pastoral life for the pursuits of agriculture, and at a very early date acquired fixed habitations.

The first season after the invasion would bring to the new people the striking phenomenon of a flood in the river; and the regular recurrence of the same fact year by year would force upon their attention the advantages as well as the dangers of the overflow, and suggest the best means of protecting man and beast. Intercourse must be maintained dur-

<sup>1</sup>Scholars are divided in opinion as to the original stock from which the ancient Egyptians and the modern Copts are descended. One class of writers, headed by Bunsen, hold that the stem from which the Cushite races sprang was certainly Semitic—a judgment based on the fact of Semitic radicals and idioms in the Egyptian language. Another class, headed by Rénan, as stoutly maintain that the primitive stock of the Egyptian and Abyssinian races was Aryan or Indo-Europic. Each of these theories seems to be beset with difficulties quite insuperable. A better opinion is that the primitive people of southern Arabia, of the lower Tigris, of the ocean shores as far east as India, and, on the west, of the Nile valley and Abyssinia, were neither Semites nor Aryans. The Author has accordingly given to the original stem of these races the general designation of "Cushite Stock," without attempting to trace its Aryan or Semitic affinities.



ing the long period of the inundation, and the primitive dealings of the mart must be carried on by water. Supplies must be provided and landmarks must be firmly set, so that there shall be no displacement by the flood. The coöperation of man with man was a necessity of the situation. The range of hills on either hand, pressing upon the increasing population, stimulated the establishment of social order, and rendered necessary the organization of large communities. The situation favored the multiplication of villages, the projection of common enterprises, and the building of cities. In no country of the ancient world were there so many towns, great and small, crowded into so narrow a district as in the valley of the Nile. The existence of great civic communities sprang from the conditions here suggested.

Nature to the ancient Egyptians presented a fixed and unchanging outline. In no other region of the globe did natural phenomena recur in an order so monotonous. The few birds that frequented the plashy brink of the river gave forth an ominous cry. The landscape was solemn; the sky, still and cloudless. Man surrounded with such a scene and impressed by such associations must soon acquire a character stern, sedate, and passionless. The ancient Egyptians were the most unmirthful of all the peoples of antiquity. The environment was such as to blunt the mirthful sentiments and dwarf the fancy. Only a race unimpassioned and saturnine could inhabit and develop Egypt.

The sameness of nature had another and still more important influence upon the early inhabitants of the country. The unchanging aspect and persistent recurrence of the same phenomena strongly stimulated the natural disposition of men to follow the same pursuit from generation to generation, thus laying the foundation of the system of caste. Whenever a vocation is handed down from father to son for several generations, that pursuit becomes more honorable than others, and it is soon regarded as a misfortune and disgrace to fall out of the line of ancestral activities and achievements. In Egypt only a few pursuits were possible; and whenever a given family

had become identified with a certain calling, as of agriculture, priestcraft, or war, it soon became little less than a scandal and a sacrilege in a member of that family to abandon the honored vocation or to affiliate with those who followed less favored pursuits. In but a few countries of the world were the antecedent conditions of caste so strongly operative as in Egypt, and in but a few were castes so early and firmly established.

The abundance soon acquired by the ancient Egyptians, the fertility of their lands, the clustering villages, and the facility of access to the valley, quickly aroused the predatory lust of the surrounding tribes. The nomads of the deserts and hills saw in the rich bottoms every inducement to foray and incursion. Those who were bravest to repel attacks and swiftest in punishing the marauders would soon be held as public benefactors, deliverers of the land out of the hands of brigands and robbers.

Property is always swift to reward its defender. The esteem in which the warrior is held increases with each successful defense of the fields and villages. The timid tillers of the soil willingly yield the palm of precedence and authority to the soldier who fights their battles. He grows strong, and stands high above those who build walls and gather harvests. The situation in Egypt was of a kind to call into constant requisition the services of a valorous soldiery, and consequently to establish and make preëminent a military caste in the country.

In the establishment of ancient states and kingdoms, he who stood as the interpreter of Nature was likewise held in great honor and esteem. The mysterious character of the duty which he was called to perform lent a charm to his office and gave to the priest—for such he was—a reputation for sanctity and wisdom. Popular respect soon grew into veneration, and the local repute of the seer quickly widened into general fame.

In proportion to the magnitude and mystery of the problems which the priest had to solve would be the reverential awe and respect with which he would be regarded by the people. If, at any time or under any conditions,

the phenomena of Nature seemed of manifest explanation, if the causes of things appeared to be easily traceable to other causes already explained by reason or tradition, to that extent would the office and influence of the priest suffer in popular esteem; and if, under other conditions, natural phenomena seemed to be specially involved and mysterious, if the causes of things appeared occult and far beyond the reach of human vision, to that degree would the character and office of the seer be held in veneration. In no other country of ancient or modern times were the aspects and processes of Nature clothed in such profound mystery as in Egypt. Here the one great striking phenomenon—the inundation of the Nile—seemed to be absolutely causeless. The absence of rain and snow left the popular imagination without even a vague hint respecting the origin of that great natural fact upon which its very life depended. The source of the river, being inaccessible by distance and the interposition of the cataracts which effectually barred up-stream exploration, seemed almost as remote and infinite as the origin of the annual flood. The solemnity of the procession of the planets and stars, unobscured by tree or mountain or cloud, heightened the effect of the mundane mystery. As the yellow, turbid waters swelled bank-full and silently overspread the valley, rising higher and higher without apparent cause, driving the flocks to the higher grounds and the people into upper compartments, the ancient Egyptians found themselves in a situation strangely combining the hurry and commotion of cities with the solitude of the seas. They who, in the midst of such phenomena, seemingly causeless and preternatural, assumed the task of accounting for the order and the cause of things—that is, of constructing a system of natural and religious philosophy—would from the beginning be regarded by the people with peculiar awe and veneration. Even the powerful soldier-class would do reverence to those who explained—and perhaps influenced—that hidden world of mystery from which proceeded both benefits and disasters. The natural environment in which the civilization of ancient Egypt was planted was exceptionally favorable

to the development of a priestly caste, separated from the people and specially powerful in the affairs of the nation.

In a country of hills and rivers and forests, the people are easily divided into distinct communities, having diverse tastes and conflicting political interests. In such a situation there is a natural tendency to the development of popular institutions. Republics spring up and flourish under conditions of struggling personal interests and antagonistic political preferences. In countries where the physical and industrial situation of all classes is the same, institutions of an opposite sort are likely to prevail. Monarchy finds its natural soil in the sameness of the situation of its subjects. And this was peculiarly the condition in ancient Egypt. A great number of civic communities, some greater, some of less note, but all in like relation as to soil, industry, disposition, interest, and physical surrounding, could but suggest a strong centralized government, despotic in its nature and military in its methods. The situation was such as to foster and develop a race of warrior-princes, before whose ambitions the liberties of the Egyptians would fall an easy prey.

Such then was the ethnic origin of the people of Egypt, so far as it is understood; and such were the antecedent physical conditions by which that people was most deeply impressed during the formative period of Egyptian nationality. From these conditions arose the peculiar institutions which flourished for so long a period in the valley of the Nile.

The ancient Egyptians were a people of great power and vigor, but without the passions and caprices of most of the European tribes. The constitution of the race was at once elastic and conservative, energetic and restful, obedient and pertinacious. It was a race self-conscious without egotism, haughty without disdain, laborious without great motives, ambitious without enthusiasm, warlike without the spirit of conquest.

In physical form the Egyptians were closely allied to the Asiatic peoples with whom they were ethnically related. The person and countenance, however, soon assumed a distinct type under the influence of the peculiar climate to



which they were exposed. Judging from the mummies and sculptures, the expression of the Egyptian face was sedate, fixed, impassive. The forehead was symmetrical, but rather low and receding. The eyes were black, large, and longer than those of any other race. The nose was of unusual length and slightly

lonians. The beard was scantier, and was either shaven or plaited and worn in a manner exceedingly artificial. The complexion varied from a pink flesh-color and light olive in children and girls to a darkish brown in men. The accompanying cut of the head of a modern Coptic maiden will serve to show



COPTIC MAIDEN (MODERN).

formed in the bridge. The mouth was calm and expressive; lips full, but not protruding; teeth, white and regular; chin, small and round; cheek-bones, rather high and prominent. The general outline of the face was oval, the features of the man being narrower than those of the woman. The hair was long, full, black, and crisp, like that of the Baby-

lonians. The beard was scantier, and was either shaven or plaited and worn in a manner exceedingly artificial. The complexion varied from a pink flesh-color and light olive in children and girls to a darkish brown in men. The accompanying cut of the head of a modern Coptic maiden will serve to show

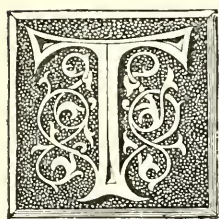
to what extent ages of time and mutations of circumstance have modified the physiognomy of Ancient Egypt into the face of to-day. The Egyptians were a lithe and active people, capable of considerable endurance, but by no means so heavy and muscular as the average of the European races. Judging from the recorded reigns of the kings, the



longevity was considerably above that of most peoples of modern times, though not greater than that of several ancient nations. Nor does it appear that the disposition of the Egyptian—albeit he was a grave and solemn being—was incapable of cheerfulness and pleasure. His courage and pertinacity, his persistent prosecution of life-long enterprises,

his skill in architecture and valor in war, his industry and frugality in peace, his placid demeanor in society and undoubted preëminence in the greatest of ancient arts, will be abundantly shown in tracing the history of those mighty kingdoms founded and maintained by his genius in the valley of the Nile.

### CHAPTER III.—CIVIL AND MILITARY ANNALS.



THE chronology of the earlier ages of Egyptian history is confused and uncertain. The sources from which the dates are taken, though unusually abundant, are in many parts obscure, and in some conflicting. According to the Greek historians, the Egyptians were the oldest race of men. When Herodotus traveled in Egypt (about 450 B. C.), the priests recited to him traditions of the extraordinary antiquity of their people. They read to him from a roll of papyrus the names of three hundred and forty-one kings who had reigned over the country between the time of Menes, founder of Memphis and first mortal ruler of Egypt, and the reign of Seti<sup>1</sup>. Before this time the land was said to have been for thousands of years under the dominion of several dynasties of gods—first the Eight Gods, then the Twelve Gods, then Osiris, then Typhon, and last of all Horus, who immediately preceded Menes, the first mortal king. The priests also took Herodotus into the temple of Thebes, and showed him in one of the halls the wooden effigies of three hundred and forty-five priests who from father to son had exercised the highest priestly office during the reigns of the kings from Menes to Seti. Each in his own life had placed his statue there.

From these data Herodotus made up his estimate of the antiquity of Egypt. Allowing three generations to a century, he computed the whole time—three hundred and

forty generations—from Menes to Seti at 11,340 years. From the accession of Seti to the conquest of Egypt by the Persians in 525 B. C. Herodotus reckons one hundred and fifty years; so that according to the Greek calculations, based as they were upon the traditional records kept by the Egyptian priesthood, the accession of Menes antedates somewhat the year 12,000 B. C.

Four centuries after the time of Herodotus, Diodorus traveled in Egypt, and to him also the legends of the priests were rehearsed. They now placed the number of their kings at four hundred and seventy, beginning with Menes; and Diodorus declares that of all these kings the priests had preserved in their holy books individual sketches, showing such minute details as how tall each king was, what he was like, and what he did. According to the computations of Diodorus, if the length of a generation be estimated as by Herodotus, the accession of Menes is thrust back to the year 16,492 B. C. If the estimate be reduced by allowing four instead of three generations to a century, the epoch of Menes is brought down, according to the data of Herodotus, to 9175, and according to Diodorus, to the year 12,500 B. C. Such are the fabulous aspects of the question.

From such extravagant recitals only thus much is clear: that the priests of Egypt possessed recorded lists of their kings, extending in a long series to an almost incredible antiquity; and that even of a mythical age preceding this, when gods and demi-gods ruled the people, accredited traditions were recited.

After the time of Alexander the Great, the

<sup>1</sup> In Greek, *Sethos*.

monuments of Egypt were opened to the researches of the Greeks. Eratosthenes, the famous librarian of Alexandria, transcribed from the sacred books of Thebes the names and histories of thirty-eight kings who had reigned in that city; and this list was afterwards carried out and completed by Apollodorus, who added the names of fifty-three additional Theban monarchs, making ninety-one in all.

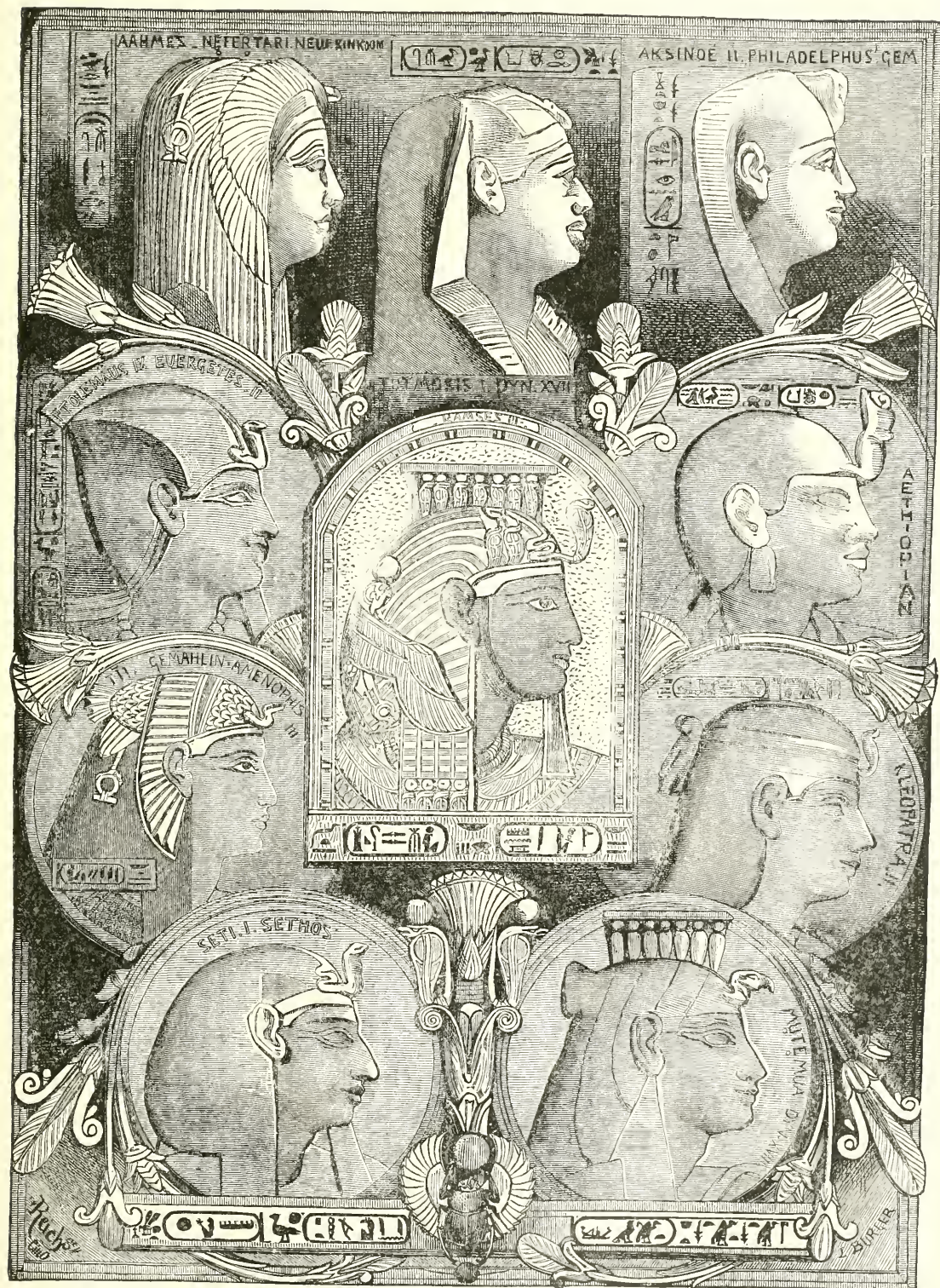
A short time previous to this, about the year 250 B. C., a learned Egyptian, named Manetho, a scribe in the temple of Thebes, produced in three books a work on the history of Egypt. The book itself, in the confusion of after times, was lost; but fragmentary chapters of it were copied into the works of other historians, notably Josephus, Julius Africanus, Eusebius, and Syncellus, and were thus preserved for posterity. According to Manetho, the rule of the Egyptian kings began with Menes and extended through thirty dynasties, down to the time of Artaxerxes Ochus, a period of 5,366 years. The date of the reign of Artaxerxes is 340 B. C., which gives for date of the accession of Menes the year 5706 B. C. This reckoning, however, is in Egyptian years, the same giving, when reduced to the Julian calendar, the year 5702 as the date of Menes.

The next view of the case is that presented by the historian Diodorus, already referred to. Further investigations among the priests and temples of Thebes revealed to him many sources of error in the traditional accounts first given of the lists of kings. The corrections and reductions of dates thus suggested, contracted the extravagant computations accredited by the priests, until the accession of Menes was brought down to a date somewhat more recent than the year 5000 B. C. One account gave Diodorus assurance that "for more than 4,700 years, kings, mostly native, had ruled, and the land had prospered greatly under them." Another narrative stated clearly that the oldest pyramid was built 3,400 years before the time of Diodorus's travels. The corrected view of this historian, therefore, fixes the date of Menes at about the year 4800 B. C.

It will thus be seen that the problem presented to modern research is this: Laying side by side the lists of kings given by Manetho and preserved by Josephus, Eusebius, Africanus, and Syncellus; the lists of the same as contained in the works of Diodorus; the lists of the same given by Eratosthenes; the lists of the same as preserved in what is known as the Turin Papyrus (belonging to a period somewhere between 1000 and 1500 B. C.); the lists of the same as deciphered from the existing monuments of Egypt—to determine by comparison and equation of dates the true chronology of the period. The chief difficulty which confuses the problem is this: Whether any, a few, or many of the kings belonging to the thirty dynasties extending from Menes to the subjugation of Egypt by the Persians were contemporaneous—reigning in different parts of the country at the same time, or whether all the dynasties were consecutive—succeeding each other in chronological order from first to last. For it is easy to conceive that one dynasty might have had dominion in Lower while another was reigning in Middle or Upper Egypt.

Some archaeologists and historians have decided this question in one way and some in another. Some have held that a few of the dynasties were contemporaneous and most of them consecutive; while others have reversed the order. The lists given by Manetho were evidently *intended* to be given in consecutive order, and the same may be said of those of Eratosthenes, and of those transcribed from the monuments. But a comparison of one list with another always shows discrepancies. The archaeologist Mariette, accepting the lists of Manetho, has placed the accession of Menes at 5004 B. C. The historian Brugsch has fixed upon 4400 B. C. as the true date of that event; and Professor Lepsius, following a somewhat different line of investigation, has reduced the latter estimate by 508 years, setting the era of Menes at the year 3892 B. C. This last date is accepted by Dr. Duncker as the best approximation which is possible in the present state of historical researches, though Baron Bunsen stoutly maintains that the Lepsius date ought to be reduced to





CELEBRITIES OF ANCIENT EGYPT.



the year 3643 B. C.—a difference of 243 years.

The system of Lepsius may be regarded as approximately established; and the following table will, therefore, present the best that is now known of the twenty-six Egyptian dynasties from the accession of Menes to the conquest of the country by the Persians:

EMPIRE	DYNASTY	CAPITAL.	DATE B. C.
OLD EMPIRE	I	This (Abydos) . . .	3892
	II	" . . . . .	3639
	III	Memphis . . . .	3338
	IV	" . . . . .	3124
	V	" . . . . .	2840
	VI	Elephantine . . .	2744
	VII	Memphis . . . .	2592
	VIII	" . . . . .	2522
	IX	Heracleopolis . .	2674
	X	" . . . . .	2565
	XI	Thebes . . . . .	2423
	XII	" . . . . .	2380
	XIII	" . . . . .	2136
	XIV	Nois . . . . .	2167†
MIDDLE EMPIRE	XV	(The Hyksos) . .	2101
	XVI	" . . . . .	1842
	XVII	" . . . . .	1684
	XVIII	Thebes . . . . .	1591
	XIX	" . . . . .	1443
NEW EMPIRE	XX	" . . . . .	1269
	XXI	Tanis . . . . .	1091
	XXII	Bubastis . . . .	961
	XXIII	Tanis . . . . .	787
	XXIV	Sais . . . . .	729
	XXV	(The Ethiopians) .	716
	XXVI	Sais . . . . .	685
	XXVII	(The Persians) .	525

\* Dynasties IX. and X., reigning at Heracleopolis, antedated somewhat the contemporaneous Dynasties VII. and VIII., reigning at Memphis.

† Dynasty XIV., in like manner, antedates Dynasty XIII., at Thebes.

The civil and political history of Egypt begins with the reign of MENES,<sup>1</sup> founder of the First Dynasty. He was a native of This, the modern Abydos, in Upper Egypt. To him belongs the distinction of having brought under one dominion the several Egyptian states. Selecting with great wisdom a site on the lower Nile, a short distance above the divergence into the Delta, he constructed a dam, turned the course of the river to the east, and in the district thus reclaimed laid the foundations of MEMPHIS, the most splendid city of Egypt. Here he established his capital; here was built the temple of Ptah; and here the first recorded triumphs of Egyptian civilization were achieved.

<sup>1</sup> In Egyptian, *Mena*.

On the north and west of the city, Menes directed artificial lakes to be constructed as a part of the defenses of his metropolis. On the south side a huge dyke was thrown up as a protection against inundations of the river. The treasures of the government were established in the city; the laws were revised, and the methods of administration perfected by the king and his counselors. After a long reign of sixty-two years, Menes lost his life in a battle with a hippopotamus, and was enrolled by his countrymen among the gods of Egypt.

Menes was succeeded on the throne by ATETA,<sup>1</sup> to whom is attributed the building of the citadel and palace of Memphis. He is reputed to have been a physician and writer of works on anatomy, fragments of which have survived to the present day.

The third monarch was KENKEXES, of whom no traditions are preserved. The fourth was UENEPHES, in whose reign occurred the first famine recorded in Egyptian history. To him is attributed the building of the pyramid of Kochome, the oldest, perhaps, of all these marvelous structures. During the reign of SEMENPSES, the seventh king of the First Dynasty, a great plague is said to have occurred, and many accompanying portents are mentioned in the traditions of the time. The fact of a plague and a famine at an epoch so remote as the earliest dynasty is sufficient proof that the country was already old and thickly peopled.

The accession of BUTAN<sup>2</sup> marks the beginning of Dynasty II. During the reign of this monarch an earthquake is said to have opened a great chasm, swallowing up many people near the city of Bubastis, in Lower Egypt. The successor of Butan was KAKAN,<sup>3</sup> who is celebrated for having introduced the worship of the bull Apis at Memphis, the calf Mnevis at Heliopolis, and the sacred goat at Mendes. The reign of the next king, BAINNUTER,<sup>4</sup> was distinguished by the passage of a law making woman, equally with man, eligible to the crown of Egypt. During the reign of NEPHERCHERES, the seventh sovereign

<sup>1</sup> In Greek, *Athotis*.

<sup>2</sup> In Greek, *Boëthos*.

<sup>3</sup> In Greek, *Kaiechos*.

<sup>4</sup> In Greek, *Binothris*.

of this line, the waters of the Nile are said, in a tradition repeated by Manetho, to have been sweet like honey for a period of eleven days; and the eighth monarch, named LESOCHRIS, is reputed to have been a giant five cubits and three palms in height.

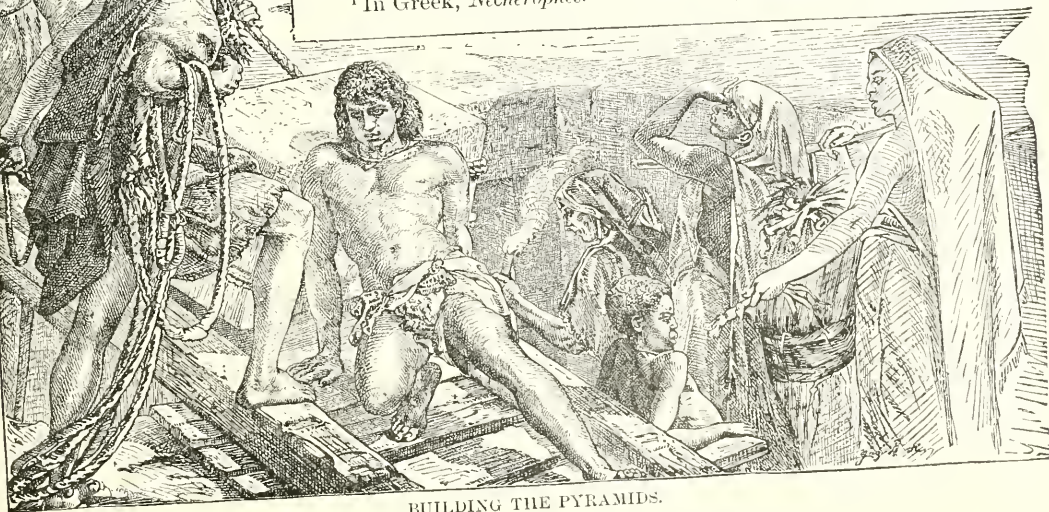
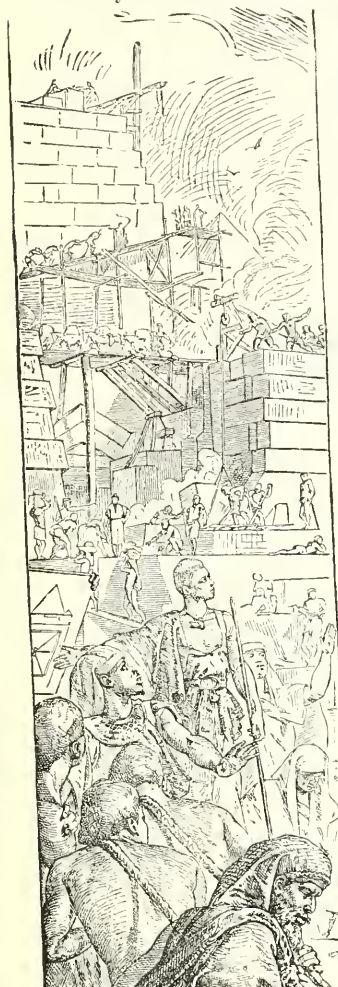
The royal house was now changed by the accession of the Memphian king NEBKA,<sup>1</sup> who was the head of Dynasty III. During his reign the Libyans, who had been subjected by the Egyptians, revolted, and were frightened back into allegiance by an alleged increase in the disc of the moon as they were marching to battle. The legend is no doubt traceable to the occurrence of a lunar eclipse, a phenomenon which exercised a striking influence upon the superstitious imaginations of the ancients. Nebka was succeeded by TOSORTHIROS, *the Peaceful*, the Egyptian Æsculapius, who is said to have been a patron of letters and to have introduced, or at any rate improved, the art of building with hewn stone. The last king of this dynasty was SNEFRU, *the Betterer*, though the lists of Manetho add the name of Sephuris as the last of Dynasty III.

The close of this line of sovereigns is marked as the time from which Egyptian history can begin to be reproduced from existing contemporaneous monuments. Of the following three dynasties abundant materials are found in the manifold and wonderful sculptures of the age for the reconstruction of both the political and the social history of the epoch.

The Fourth Dynasty, also a Memphian House, began with the accession of KNUFU.<sup>2</sup> This is the epoch of the pyramid-builders, one of the most brilliant eras in ancient Egyptian history. The government had become consolidated. The regal power had expanded with the growth of the kingdom. The population had so multiplied as to fill the land and to place at the disposal of absolute monarchs a vast amount of unemployed manual labor. The native fertility of the lands had given to all classes a greater amount of leisure than was enjoyed by any other ancient people. The long continuance of the annual

<sup>1</sup> In Greek, *Necherophes*.

<sup>2</sup> In Greek, *Cheops*; in Manetho, *Suphis*.



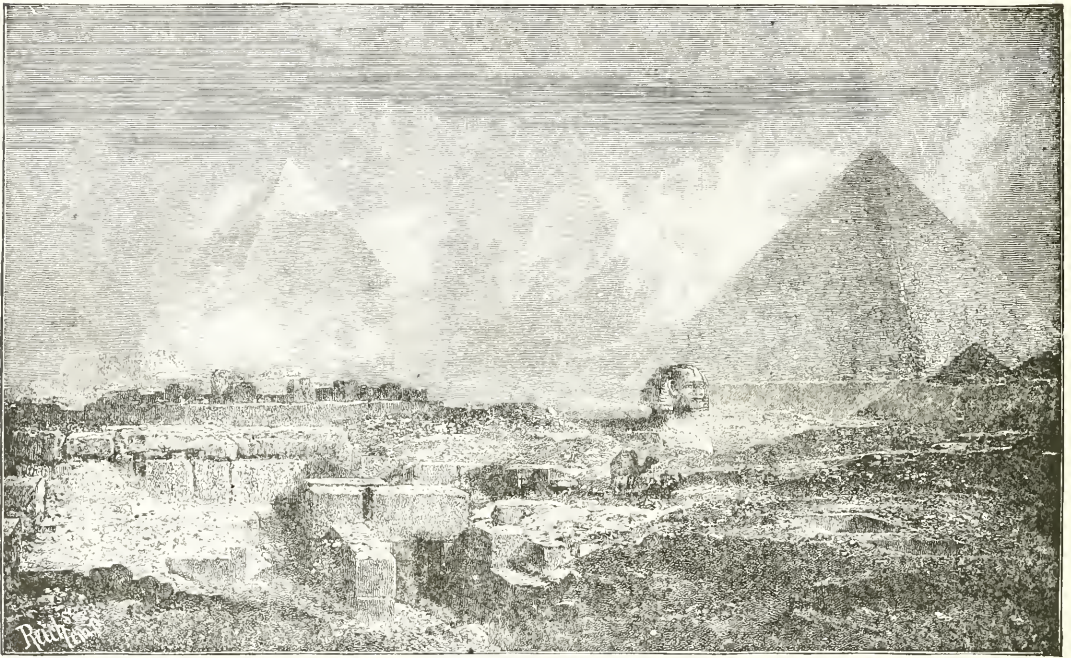
BUILDING THE PYRAMIDS.



inundation, during which the ordinary vocations of industry were measurably suspended, gave additional opportunity to the kings to divert the labor of the populace to ends of personal fame and monumental vanity. Under these conditions, the peculiar ambition of the times was directed to the construction of magnificent sepulchers for the kings. The pyramids were the result of this monument-building impulse.

West of Memphis, at a distance of about ten miles and running parallel with the river, rises a barren plateau. The elevation is a hundred feet above the level of the Nile, and

chambers hewn out of the rock; and *what* more natural than that the king, who in life was lifted so high above his subjects, should in death be buried with a more magnificent sepulcher? So the royal sarcophagus was placed in a more spacious chamber under a grander monument of stone. By degrees the sepulchral heap grew into definite shape, taking the immovable form and severe aspect of a pyramid. The structure became more and more regular in its interior arrangement and external outline until, sharply defined against the sky, the finished pile stood forth the pride



PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH.

stretches north and south for many miles between the verdant valley and the Libyan desert beyond. Owing to the rocky character of the ridge, its elevation above the river-level, and the fact that the Sun, the chief deity of the ancient Egyptians, seemed to sink to rest behind it at nightfall, the kings, looking from their palace in Memphis, and musing upon the common fate which should soon call them to the abodes of the gods, naturally chose the western plateau as the most fitting place to build their tombs.

In the sides of this hilly elevation the bodies of the common dead were placed in

of the builders and the marvel of after ages. Along the plateau west of Memphis, between Abu Roash and Dahshur, about seventy of these mighty monuments were erected.<sup>1</sup> Among these three were preëminent on account of their size and magnificence. They are known as the Pyramids of Ghizeh, near which city they stand. They are certainly the work of the Fourth Dynasty, and were built in the twenty-fifth century before the Christian era. The three are the most conspicuous objects in a

<sup>1</sup> In the district mentioned in the text, Professor Lepsius has traced the outlines of sixty-seven pyramids.





[illegible]

## CHRONOLOGICAL CHART

No. 1.

ANCIENT AFRICAN ~~AND~~ ASIATIC KINGDOMS.

— SHOWING —

THE PROGRESS OF EVENTS FROM B. C. 3892 TO B. C. 525.

PREPARED BY JOHN CLARK RIDPATH, LL. D.

COPYRIGHTED, 1885.

4000 B.C.	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	3000 B.C.
		92. First Dynasty founded by Menes. Reign of Ateta. Reign of Kenkenes.		Reign of Semempses. 38. Accession of Dynasty II. Reign of Butan. Reign of Kakan. Reign of Bainnuter.		Reign of Nephthys. Reign of Lescoris. 38. Accession of Dynasty III. Reign of Nebka. Reign of Tetosorthros.		Reign of Snefru. 24. Accession of Dynasty IV. Reign of Khufu. Epoch of the Great Pyramids. Reign of Khafra. Building of the Great Sphinx. Reign of Menkera.		

[illegible]





group of ten similar structures, the other seven in the neighborhood being of less magnitude and importance.

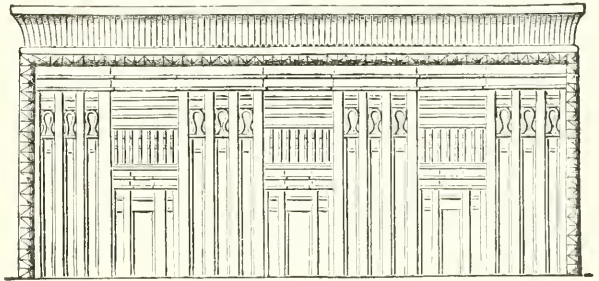
The largest and most ancient of these three great piles is the pyramid of Khufu, founder of Dynasty IV. It was originally four hundred and eighty feet in height; but the apex has been broken away, until it now measures only four hundred and fifty feet. Each side of the base is seven hundred and sixteen feet in length, the slant being five hundred and seventy-four feet. The structure contains nearly ninety million cubic feet of masonry. It stands precisely on the thirtieth parallel of latitude, and the four sides face the four cardinal points of the compass with geometric exactitude. On the north side, precisely in the middle, and fifty-two feet above the original ground-level of the pyramid, a rectangular opening is cut, being the door of a descending passage three feet broad and four feet high. This passage leads downwards at an angle to a chamber hewn in the rock of the foundation, more than a hundred feet below the ground-level of the base. The chamber lies in a perpendicular line six hundred feet directly under the apex of the pyramid and thirty-six feet above the level of the Nile. At certain points in the main passage to this chamber diverging ways are cut, leading to two other chambers, which also lie in the axis of the pyramid immediately above the first.

It was in the solemn stillness of these chambers that the stone coffins containing the royal mummies were laid to their final rest. Upon the walls round about was sculptured the story of the dead king's deeds. The door of the passage was sealed with a stone, and the name of the deceased monarch added to the lists of gods in the temple. It is said that three hundred and sixty thousand men were employed for twenty years in the building of the monument of Khufu.

The second of the three great pyramids in this group was built by Khafra, brother and successor of Khufu. It is on a level slightly above that of the first, and was originally four hundred and fifty-seven feet in

altitude. The masonry is somewhat inferior to that exhibited in the monument of Khufu. The general proportion is the same, and the arrangement of the chambers within identical with that in the larger structure.

The third pyramid on the ridge of Gizeh was built by Menkera,<sup>1</sup> a successor of Khafra and fourth or fifth king of Dynasty IV. This structure is but two hundred and thirty-three feet at the base, and the slant height two hundred and sixty-two feet. The Menkera pyramid stands on looser soil than its more ambitious sisters, and the substructure is consequently of greater relative proportions. Part of the exterior consists of polished slabs of granite. The sepulchral chamber within is double, one apartment being behind the other. In the innermost vault the mummy-box of Menkera himself was found



SARCOPHAGUS OF MENKERA.  
Found in the tomb of that king at Gizeh.

in recent times by General Howard Vyse, and the hieroglyphic legend written on the case, containing, in addition to the name of the king, the myth of the God Osiris, has been deciphered and rendered into English.<sup>2</sup> Until recently no other of the royal mummies had been recovered.

The pyramids are built of successive layers of stone varying from two to six feet in thickness, according to the size of the structure. Each layer is less in area than the one on which it rests, and thus the structure is made

<sup>1</sup> In Greek: *Mencheres*, or *Mycerinus*.

<sup>2</sup> The sarcophagus in which the mummy lies is blue basalt, and bears the following inscription: "O Osiris, King Menkera, ever living one; begotten of the sky, carried in the bosom of Nut, scion of Seb. Thy mother Nut is outstretched over thee; in her name of the mystery of the sky may she deify thee, and destroy thy enemies, King Menkera, ever-living one."

to present on either side the appearance of a series of stone steps narrowing and receding to the top. It is stated by Diodorus on the authority of the Egyptian priests that the immense masses of stone used in constructing the pyramids were brought *from Arabia*, and were put into place by building up beneath them huge mounds of earth from which the blocks could be slid into position as from an inclined plane. Certain it is that in many instances the stone used in the pyramids is not found within many miles of where the structures are erected.

Ancient fable and modern ingenuity have been put on the rack to explain the purpose of the pyramids on some hypothesis other than that they were the burial places of the kings. Some authors have found in the mechanical exactness with which the great structures were reared an evidence that their dimensions were intended as the basis of a system of weights and measures. Others have discovered that the pyramids were constructed with a geometrical design, and with the purpose of teaching astronomy. Others still, disdaining such humble theories, have declared that nothing less than a divine origin, plan, and purpose could account for the wonderful skill and hidden mystery of the great monuments. As it respects all such theories, the historian can say no more than that the pyramids are solely, plainly, and indubitably the sepulchers of the dead kings of Egypt. That they stand with their faces to the four cardinal points of the compass signifies no more than that men in all ages have by preference built their houses with the four sides set to the north, south, east, and west. That the tomb of Khufu stands on the thirtieth parallel, whether it was so placed fortuitously or with design, implies no more at most than that the thirtieth degree was known to the men who built the pyramid—a thing by no means marvelous.

The principal reigns of Dynasty IV. were of extraordinary length. According to Manetho, Khufu reigned for sixty-three years; Khafra, for sixty-six years, and Menkera for sixty-three years. But according to Diodorus the first is reduced to fifty and the second to fifty-six years. Even these figures are to be

accepted with some caution, for it is related in an inscription that Queen Mertitef, who had been a wife of Snefru, last king of Dynasty III., was a favorite of both Khufu and Khafra—an impossible thing unless her charms survived for more than a century.

The reigns of the three great kings were marked by military exploits as well as domestic progress and architectural grandeur. Khufu made war in Ethiopia and completed the conquests which had been undertaken by Snefru. On the rocks of the Wadi Maghara, in the peninsula of Sinai, is a sculptured image of Khufu lifting on high a war-club over an enemy kneeling before him. To this king is also ascribed the authorship of a part of the *Funeral Ritual*—one of the few existing remnants of Egyptian literature.

To the great monarch, Khafra, is attributed the building of the enigmatical colossus called the Sphinx. This great image stands north of the second pyramid of Ghizeh, which bears the name of Khafra. The effigy is the symbolical form of the god Harmachu, meaning Horus the Resplendent, to whom the adjacent temple was dedicated. The figure is hewn out of the living rock, has the body of a crouching lion and the head of a man, capped and bearded, and is one hundred and ninety feet in length. Between the paws, which are extended to a distance of fifty feet, is a monumental stone bearing the name of Khafra, who is said to have dedicated the image. The shoulders are thirty-six feet in breadth, and the head measures from top to chin twenty-eight feet and six inches. The drifting sands of centuries have fallen around the mighty effigy until only the solemn visage, looking out toward the Nile, and a small part of the shoulders and back remain above the level of the desert.

The heavy drain made upon the labor and the public revenues by the monumental enterprises of Khufu and Khafra gave rise to the tradition, current in the times of Herodotus, that those kings were the oppressors of the people and enemies to the worship of the gods. It appears that the priests gave countenance to this report, as well as to that which made Menkera the restorer of the national religion



which had been despised and neglected by his predecessors. Careful examination of contemporaneous sculptures have shown both traditions to be without foundation in fact.

With the close of the Fourth Dynasty—even before its close—a decline is noticeable in the political power and architectural grandeur which had prevailed under Khufu and Khafra. The accession of Dynasty V. was without *éclat* or splendor. Of the reigns of the nine kings who are said to have comprised the line very little is recorded. The practice of giving a throne name or title to the sovereign began with Assa, next to the last monarch of this dynasty. To this period also is referred the composition of one of the oldest works in Egyptian literature—a treatise on moral duties written by Prince PTAH-HOTEP, son of Assa. In the time of the last king of the line, named UNA, the form of the royal sepulchers was changed from the regular to the truncated pyramid, as illustrated in the great monument called “Pharaoh’s Seat,”<sup>1</sup> north of the pyramids of Dashur.

The kings of the Sixth Dynasty belonged to a family from Elephantis<sup>2</sup> in Upper Egypt. It is probable that the seat of government was for a while transferred from Memphis into Middle Egypt. It is certain that during the period Memphian influence was less marked in the affairs of the kingdom than it had been previously. From this epoch begins the history of the foreign wars of conquest undertaken by the Egyptian sovereigns. National ambition began to take the place of religious solemnity, and the effect of this diversion of the public mind was immediately noticeable in the decline of art and the neglect of monumental enterprises. The period is marked by a less careful style in the sculpture, and less elaborate designs in the royal sepulchers.

<sup>1</sup> In Egyptian *Mastabat-Faraon*.

<sup>2</sup> Elephantis is a small island in the Nile, opposite Syene.

The growth of the military spirit is attested by the famous inscription of Una, found in a tomb at Abydos, wherein it is set forth that great foreign wars had been undertaken and conquests made by the armies of the king. The conquered countries and nations are mentioned by name, from which it appears that the royal forces, levied from all classes of the population, and composed in part of Negroes enlisted from the surrounding tribes, had already carried the Egyptian dominion far



THE GREAT SPHINX.

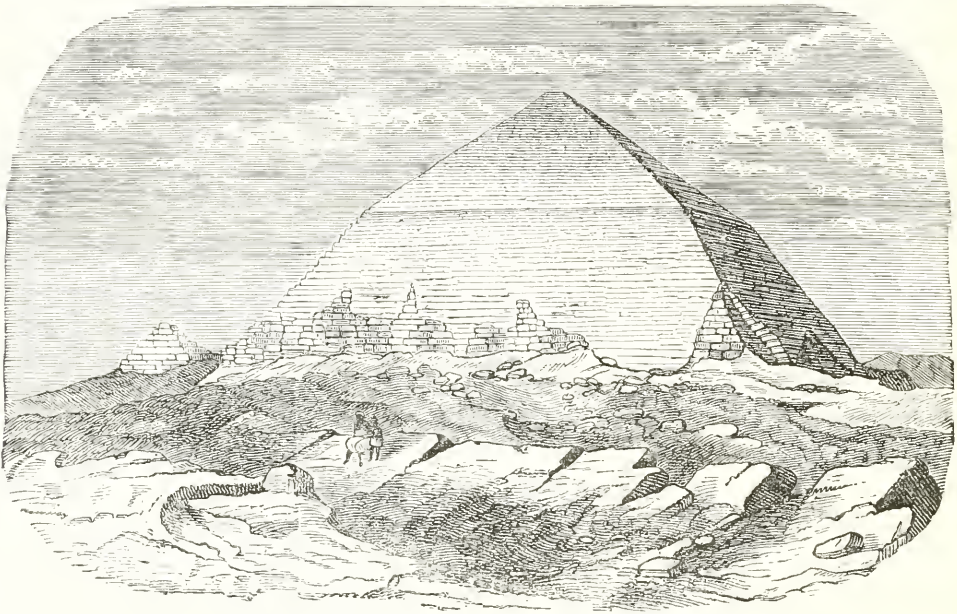
into the deserts of Syria and Arabia. Una, himself, was general of five expeditions against the Amu and Herusha tribes, probably a Semitic race of the Sinaitic peninsula. Nubia was also subjugated and a stone pillar set up at the cataracts of Wadi Halfa commemorative of the conquest.

The chief interest of Dynasty VI. centers in the long and glorious reign of PEPI.<sup>1</sup> He took the throne at the age of six and held it, according to the united testimony of Manetho, Eratosthenes, and the inscriptions, for ninety-

<sup>1</sup> In Greek, *Phiopis*; in Eratosthenes, *Apappus*.

*five years.* It was during this extraordinary reign that the great conquests already referred to were made, and the dominion of Egypt extended to the Red Sea and the cataracts of the Nile. The inscriptions of Pepi are very numerous in all parts of the country from Tanis in Lower Egypt and the Wadi Maghara, where the king is represented on the rocks as striking down an enemy, to Nubia, where it is said his dockyards were established. In Middle Egypt he founded the "City of Pepi," the site of which is now unknown, and built for his tomb the second of the two great pyramids of Dashur.

At the close of Dynasty VI. there is a great break in the monumental records of Egypt. Of the next four dynasties no trustworthy contemporaneous inscriptions have been discovered. The lists of Manetho, however, cover the period, and a few names of kings succeeding the Sixth and preceding the Eleventh Dynasty have been deciphered from a tablet at Abydos and the Chamber of Kings at El-Karnak. According to Manetho, Dynasties VII. and VIII. belonged to a Memphian line, and Dynasties IX. and X. to a Heracleopolite family. Beyond this, little is known. Whether the dynasties occupying this gap of



PYRAMID OF DASHUR.—Length about 200 feet.

The successor of Pepi was his son MERENRA. Una was made viceroy of Upper Egypt, and to him Ethiopia was a tributary province. In that country, beyond the Tropic of Cancer, timber yards were established for building ships. The copper mines of Arabia and of the peninsula of Sinai were developed, and the quarries of granite of Elephantis were opened to furnish stone for the monuments. Of the reign of NEFERKARA, brother and successor of Merenra, little is known; and the same may be said of Queen NITOCRIS, last of the line, though after times were filled with her fame.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Story of Cinderella has been traced by curious antiquaries to a legend by Queen Nitocris.

more than a century and a half (2592–2423 B. C.) were contemporary—some reigning in Upper and others in Middle Egypt—remains an undecided question. It is more than likely that some of the kings of the House of Heracleopolis, belonging to Dynasties IX. and X., were local and contemporary with the sovereigns of the Memphian line.

The Twelfth Dynasty was introduced with the reign of AMENEMHA<sup>1</sup> I., 2380–2371 B. C. He had been a successful minister of a preceding king, and began his own career as a sovereign by imitating the civil and military policy of Pepi. All Egypt was under his do-

<sup>1</sup>In Greek, *Amenemes*.

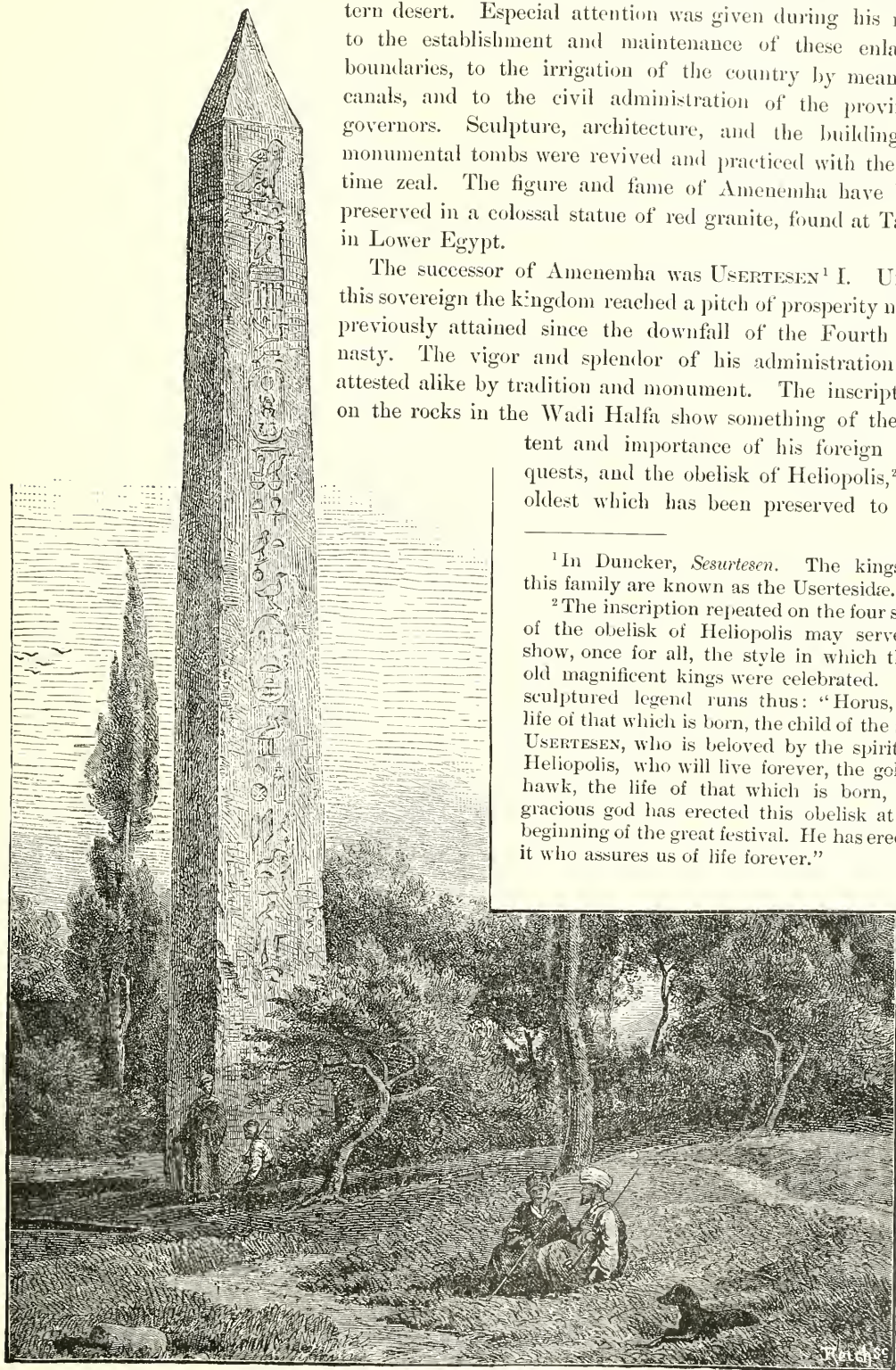


minion, from Tanis to Nubia, from the Red Sea to the western desert. Especial attention was given during his reign to the establishment and maintenance of these enlarged boundaries, to the irrigation of the country by means of canals, and to the civil administration of the provincial governors. Sculpture, architecture, and the building of monumental tombs were revived and practiced with the old-time zeal. The figure and fame of Amenemha have been preserved in a colossal statue of red granite, found at Tanis, in Lower Egypt.

The successor of Amenemha was USERTESSEN<sup>1</sup> I. Under this sovereign the kingdom reached a pitch of prosperity never previously attained since the downfall of the Fourth Dynasty. The vigor and splendor of his administration are attested alike by tradition and monument. The inscriptions on the rocks in the Wadi Halfa show something of the extent and importance of his foreign conquests, and the obelisk of Heliopolis,<sup>2</sup> the oldest which has been preserved to our

<sup>1</sup>In Duncker, *Sesurtesen*. The kings of this family are known as the Usertesidae.

<sup>2</sup>The inscription repeated on the four sides of the obelisk of Heliopolis may serve to show, once for all, the style in which these old magnificent kings were celebrated. The sculptured legend runs thus: "Horus, the life of that which is born, the child of the sun, USERTESSEN, who is beloved by the spirits of Heliopolis, who will live forever, the golden hawk, the life of that which is born, this gracious god has erected this obelisk at the beginning of the great festival. He has erected it who assures us of life forever."



OBELISK OF HELIOPOLIS.



day, bears witness to the grandeur of his works and reputation.

The policy of this great monarch was still further advanced by his successor, AMENEMHA II., and USERTESEN II., the details of whose reigns are not so fully known. But of the next king, USERTESEN III., the materials are again abundant. No former sovereign had a reign so glorious as this, the most illustrious of the Usertesidæ. The boundary of Egypt on the south was now fixed at Semneh and Kummeh, beyond the Second Cataract. Here were built outposts and fortresses, and stone tablets were erected, defining the established limits of the kingdom.

But these triumphs of political enterprise and military prowess were eclipsed by the great works of engineering belonging to this reign. The most noted of these were the great temple called the Labyrinth and the famous artificial lake of Moëris. Both of these wonders were constructed in the peculiar urn-shaped valley called the Feiyoöm, a few miles south-west from Memphis. In this place there is a cleft in the Libyan hills, through which the valley of the Nile spreads out, bayou-like, for a considerable distance to the west. Through this opening in the hills the engineers of Amenemha cut a broad canal, leading from the Nile into the valley of Feiyoöm, and there, by excavation and dykes, discharged the waters from the annual inundation into the artificial lake. A large part of the valley was inclosed within the strong dams which held this overflow. The western part of the Feiyoöm was on a lower level, and to all the region the waters of the lake were distributed in season, making the whole a luxuriant garden throughout the year. The reservoir was abundantly stocked with fish, furnishing food and amusement to the people.

More marvelous than the waters of Moëris was the national temple called the Labyrinth, built near the entrance of the canal into the lake. Perhaps no structure of antiquity was more justly celebrated. Herodotus declares, after personal inspection, that its merits were greater than its fame, inasmuch that not all the temples of the Greeks put together could equal, either in cost or splendor, this solitary

wonder of Egypt. The Labyrinth contained twelve roofed courts, abutting on each other, with opposite entrances, six to the north and six to the south. The whole was inclosed with a vast wall. The temple was half above ground and half subterranean, each division containing fifteen hundred apartments. Those above ground were visited and examined by Herodotus himself, who seems to have been struck dumb with wonder at the elaborate magnificence of the structure. The subterranean chambers were the sepulchers of the kings and the halls of the sacred crocodiles. So great and complicated were the winding ways, the system of colonnades, and the hidden entrances, that a traveler without a guide could not extricate himself from the infinite complexity of the palaces around him.

In addition to the great monuments which mark the reigns of the Usertesidæ, the domestic life of the times was of a sort to excite equal admiration. In the tombs of Beni Hassan, belonging to this epoch, five varieties of plows are depicted. The farming life is shown in detail; sheep and goats treading the seed into the ground; wheat gathered into sheaves, threshed, measured, carried in sacks to the granary; flax bundled on the backs of asses; figs gathered; grapes thrown in the press; wine carried to the cellar; the overseer and the hands in the fields and gardens; the bastinado laid on the backs of laggards. The scene changes to herds and flocks; fine breeds of bullocks; calves, asses, sheep, goats; cows milked; butter made; cheese handled; fowls strutting in the yard; fine varieties of geese and ducks. In other sculptures we see the spinners and weavers at their work; the potter manipulating the clay or burning the ware in the furnace; the smith manufacturing javelins and lances; the painter with his colors; the mason with his trowel; the shoemaker at his bench; the glass-blower, with distended cheeks, plying his art.<sup>1</sup> In another part the interior of the Egyptian home is shown, furnished according to the wealth and taste of the occupant; servants at their work;<sup>2</sup> kitchen

<sup>1</sup> Duncker's *History of Antiquity*, Vol. I, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> In these groups Negroes are easily distinguished from the natives.

utensils in use; domestic apes; cats and dogs. Public life is also displayed: soldiers exercising in arms; battles fought; walls battered; towns carried by storm. Sports have come in vogue: wrestlers with strained sinews; jugglers; musicians; dancers, both men and women; dwarfs and deformities exhibited; fishing parties with hooks and spears and nets; every phase of life depicted in imperishable tablets of stone.

After the short reign of Amenemha IV., the Twelfth Dynasty ended with Queen SEBEKNEFRURA, and was succeeded by Dynasty XIII., of which no more is known than that the thirteen kings of this line occupied the throne for an aggregate period of but fifty years, and that the kingdom declined rapidly from the grandeur which it had attained under the Usertesidæ. The short reigns of the sovereigns of this house indicate an epoch of social disturbance and civil commotion. Another break occurs at this time in the monumental records, and it is probable that the first shocks of impending disasters had already disturbed and alarmed the country. For the first time the seat of government was transferred to the Delta and fixed at the city of Xoïs, from which circumstance the kings of the Fourteenth Dynasty are called Xoïtes. This house succeeded in maintaining itself, though hardly beyond the limits of the capital, during the whole of the stormy and lawless period of invasion which was soon to follow.

From causes not well understood Egypt was now no longer warlike and aggressive. On the contrary, the condition of the country was such as to invite assault. The armies of Khufu and of Amenemha III. had gone to dust. The national spirit and resources had withered to such an extent as to promise success to barbarian invaders, and the invaders quickly came.

Out of Syria and desert Arabia a swarm of men, belonging to tribes of no historic reputation, gathered on the eastern frontier and then burst into the kingdom. They overran Middle Egypt and captured Memphis. They sacked the towns, pillaged the villages, and broke the statues. They made prisoners of

princes, put men to the sword, and sold women and children into slavery. The leader of the horde, named SALATIS, took up his abode at Memphis as king of the country. Lower and Upper Egypt were both made tributary to the barbarian. He planted garrisons in various parts of the country, and along the eastern border built fortresses against Assyria. Eastward from Bubastis he founded the new city of Avaris,<sup>1</sup> fortified it with a strong wall, and placed therein the bulk of his army, numbering 240,000 men. Such was the founding of the new line of sovereigns known as the Hyksos,<sup>2</sup> or Shepherd Kings of Egypt.

After Salatîs came in succession five of these barbarian sovereigns,<sup>3</sup> whose joint reigns covered a period of two hundred and forty years. Between them and the native Egyptian princes who, now in the Delta and now in Upper Egypt, raised the standard of revolt there was almost constant war. But the insurrections were unsuccessful; the Hyksos triumphed more and more, and the whole country falling under their sway sank into a state of semi-barbarism. The period of this dominion lasted, according to Manetho, for five hundred and eleven years, during which the fame of Egypt was virtually extinguished. Only a few monumental records of the time have survived the cataclysm; but the sketches of Manetho, Josephus, and the Turin Papyrus bear witness to the deplorable condition of the land while the invaders comprising Dynasties XV. and XVI. remained in power.

Finally a rebellion broke out in the district of Thebes. The insurrectionists, led by native captains, won a decisive victory over the Shepherds, compelling them to draw in their outposts and concentrate their forces at Avaris. This place was besieged by TUTHMOSIS, a Theban king; and when neither besieged nor besiegers were successful a compact was entered into in accordance with which the Hyk-

<sup>1</sup> At or near the site of the modern Pelusium.

<sup>2</sup> The word is from *hyk*, meaning, in the sacred language, a king; and *sos*, in the vulgar dialect, signifying a shepherd.

<sup>3</sup> Names of Hyksos after Salatîs: Beön, Apachmas, Apophis, Annas, Assis.

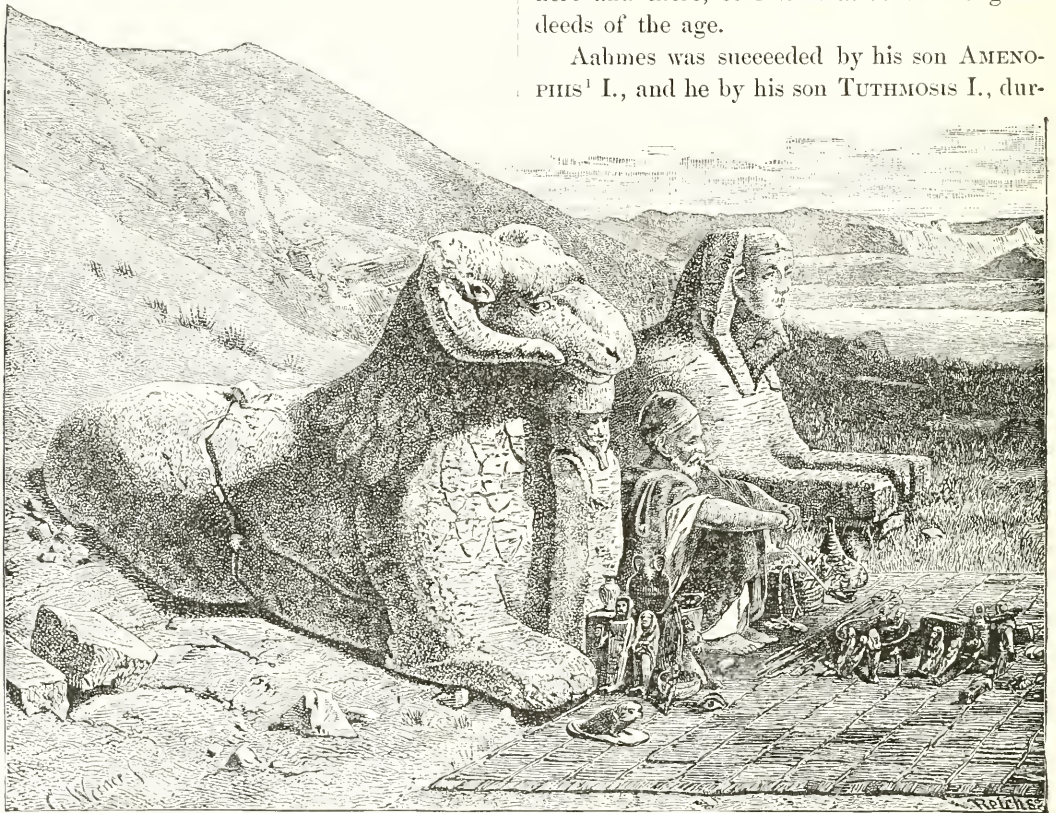


sos were to take their flocks and herds and leave the country forever. So the fierce invaders who had held Egypt in terror withdrew into the deserts of Syria.

After the overthrow of the Hyksos, the Theban House became dominant in all Egypt. This, the Eighteenth Dynasty, began with the accession of AAHMES,<sup>1</sup> about 1591 B. C. Upper and Lower Egypt were again consolidated

and the introduction of the horse into Egypt and of the war chariot. It is the age in which the relative places of the priestly and the military caste in Egyptian society are reversed, and the soldier made preëminent. In sculpture and monumental elaboration there was a renaissance of the art of Dynasties XI. and XII. The famous temple-palace of Amun-Ra at Thebes was built, and obelisks were erected here and there, commemorative of the great deeds of the age.

Aahmes was succeeded by his son AMENOPHIS<sup>1</sup> I., and he by his son TUTHMOSIS I., dur-



SPHINXES OF AMMUN-RA.—THEBES.

under one crown. Aahmes secured the influence and favor of Ethiopia by marrying the king's daughter, the princess Nefru-ari, famous for her dusky charms, her wealth, and her accomplishments. Egyptian supremacy over the surrounding nations was again acknowledged or forced by the sword. The decayed and ruined temples were restored to their old-time richness and splendor. The military spirit, stirred into activity by the struggle for independence, burned for the excitements of war. It is the epoch of the in-

ing whose reign the first great campaigns were undertaken against Assyria and the East. Phœnicia and Syria were subdued, and the arms of Egypt borne to the banks of the Euphrates. Late in his reign, Tuthmosis associated with himself on the throne his daughter HATASU, who, after the king's death, reigned jointly with her elder brother TUTHMOSIS II. Her rank and influence in the state furnish another proof of the high estimation in which women were held by the ancient Egyptians.

<sup>1</sup> Frequently written *Amosis*.

<sup>1</sup> In Egyptian *Ammun-Hotep*; sometimes *Ra-Hotep*.



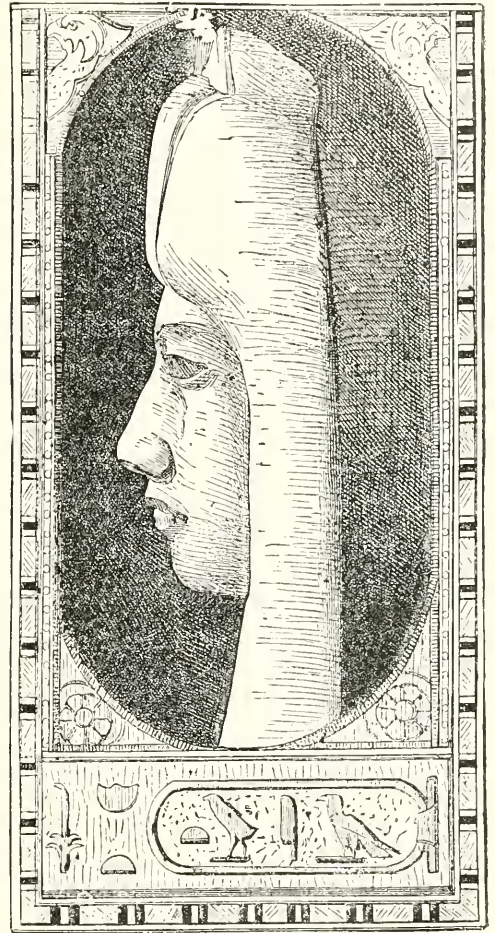
Hatasu outlived her brother, and then associated with herself her younger brother TUTHMOSIS III. Him she outranked in the government, and public affairs she directed at her will. By her the temple of Amun-ra was completed, and her fame is recorded in the great obelisks at Thebes.

After a happy and prosperous reign of twenty-one years, Queen Hatasu was succeeded by Tuthmosis, who obliterated as far as practicable his sister's name and inscriptions from the monuments, dating his own reign from the beginning of hers. The Assyrian wars were still carried on, and a great battle, in which the Egyptians were victorious, was fought at Migiddo. Kadesh, the chief city of the Kheta tribes, was twice taken by the Egyptians, and the king marched his armies as far as Nineveh. The entire reign of fifty-five years was characterized by military activity and civil enterprise.

The next king of the dynasty was AMENOPHIS II. In the beginning of his reign the Egyptians captured Nineveh. On his return from one of his eastern campaigns, he is said to have brought back the bodies of seven kings whom he had slain in battle, and whose heads he put up as trophies on the walls of Thebes. After a short reign he was succeeded by his son TUTHMOSIS IV., who, according to Manetho, held the throne for nine years, and was in turn succeeded by his son AMENOPHIS III. He, like Aahmes, married a foreign princess, Queen Tai, perhaps out of Arabia. He began his reign by abandoning warlike enterprises, and devoted himself and his empire to works of peace. Architecture again flourished. New temples were built at Thebes, and two great statues, both of himself, with his mother and the queen in relief as the front of the die, were erected in the adjoining plain.

These two huge effigies in granite, standing in front of what was once the sanctuary of Osiris, have survived the wreck of centuries, and still rise above the flat in solemn state by the edge of a forest of palms. The northern colossus is the most famous, being the statue which was known to the Greeks by the name of the *Vocal Memnon*. According

to the Greek tradition, based on the narrative of travelers who had visited the spot, the figure was said to give forth at sunrise a musical strain resembling the twanging of harp-strings. From the base of the pedestal to the crown it is fifty-nine feet in height. The ruined palace of Luxor likewise bears witness to the grandeur of the reign of Amenophis. This gorgeous temple was connected with a similar palace at



QUEEN TAI.

El-Karnak by an avenue guarded by a thousand sphinxes, and at Thebes a colonnade in the same style was lined with colossi of the goddess Pasht. In the inscriptions of his times this monarch is known by the distinguished title of *Pacifier of Egypt*.

Next in the succession was AMENOPHIS IV., son of the preceding king. He seems to have inherited from his foreign mother a taint of heresy, together with a person of extravagant





AMENOPHIS III.—RA-HOTEP.

ugliness. Both he and his family are figured in the monuments with bodies unnaturally attenuated and features of abnormal repulsiveness. He began his reign by introducing the adoration of the sun with a ceremonial unknown to the national worship. Hymns were chanted by an orchestra of harpers, and the altars and aisles of the temples were strewn with flowers in a manner utterly at variance with the long established forms, and suggestive of the religion of the Vedas. The king changed his name to Khun-aten,<sup>1</sup> and abandoning Thebes transferred his capital to Middle Egypt. Leaving seven daughters and no son he transmitted his crown to a dynasty of sons-in-law, who were presently overthrown in a reactionary movement headed by Haremheb, a descendant of Amenophis III. By this king the heretical work of the fourth Amenophis was obliterated as

<sup>1</sup> *Aten*, being the name of the solar disc.

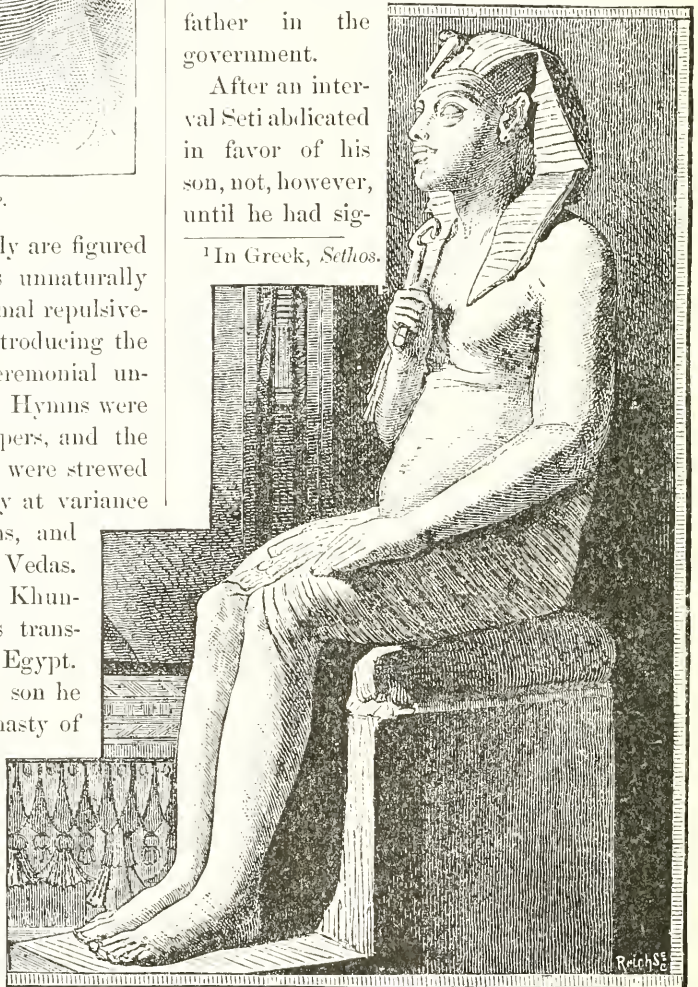
far as possible, and the dynasty ended with his reign in B. C. 1443.

Dynasty XIX. was founded by the great HOUSE OF RAMSES. The first sovereign of this name was perhaps related by descent with the Shepherd Kings, whose warlike qualities he seems to have inherited. He began his career by conducting some successful campaigns in Ethiopia, and Syria. He concluded a treaty with the nation of Hittites, and after a short reign died, leaving the crown to his son Seti<sup>1</sup> I.

This monarch took care to strengthen his claim to the throne by marrying the Princess Tai, granddaughter to Amenophis III., thus uniting his rights with those of the preceding dynasty. The offspring of this marriage was Ramses II, who on arriving at years was associated with his father in the government.

After an interval Seti abdicated in favor of his son, not, however, until he had sig-

<sup>1</sup> In Greek, *Sethos*.



STATUE OF AMENOPHIS IV.



nalized his reign with some of the finest architectural works of Egypt. Chief among these may be mentioned the great Hall of Columns at El-Karnak, containing in a series of magnificent sculptures the story of Seti's campaigns and victories.

Ramses<sup>1</sup> II. (1388–1322 B. C.) was the most illustrious of all the kings of Egypt. He is surnamed the Great. Already at ten years of age he took part in his father's wars. After the death of that sovereign the young prince, fired with military ambition, began to meditate the conquest of the world. According to Herodotus, Diodorus, and Manetho—though the narratives are by no means consistent throughout—Ramses first brought into subjection what neighboring nations soever had shown signs of rebellion against the domination of Egypt. Then dividing the country into thirty-six Nomes, and appointing his brother Armaïs to the regency in his absence, he collected a vast army of six hundred thousand foot soldiers, twenty-four thousand horse, and twenty-seven thousand war chariots, and set out on his campaign for the conquest of the nations.

Over the grand divisions of his army King Ramses placed in command certain military comrades who had been educated under his father's direction in the same discipline with himself. First of all, he directed his forces into Ethiopia, and subduing the country imposed a tribute of ivory, ebony, and gold. On the Red Sea he built a fleet of four hundred ships—the first war vessels ever constructed by the Egyptians—and subdued by land and water the islands and sea coasts as far as India. The whole of Asia to the Ganges

and beyond yielded to his arms, whereupon, turning to the north, he conquered Scythia as far as the river Tanaïs, dividing Asia from Europe.

Thence passing into Thrace the king continued his career until the severity of the climate and scarcity of food brought him to a pause. Everywhere in his triumphant course he set up pillars bearing the inscription: "This land Sesostris, king of kings and lord of lords, conquered with his arms." After nine years the victorious monarch returned laden with the untold spoils of war and captives taken from many nations.



SETI I. BURNING AN OFFERING OF INCENSE.

Such is the rather florid account left by Herodotus and Diodorus of the foreign campaigns of Ramses II. Modern research has shown, by deciphering the inscriptions on the rocks of Beyrout, in the ruins of Tanis, in the Ramesseum at Karnak, and in a temple built by Ramses in Nubia, that the praises of the great monarch's wars have been sounded in too high a key, and that his real exploits were less prodigious than they are painted in the pages of the Greek historians. It appears that his chief campaigns were into Ethiopia, Syria, and Arabia. No doubt his conquests were carried as far as Mesopotamia, and perhaps the larger part of Western Asia owned

<sup>1</sup> In Greek, *Sesostris*, *Sesosis*, or *Sethosis*.



his sway; but the written traditions of the great king are contradictory in many parts, and in not a few are evidently the result of fulsome eulogy. The building by Ramses of

a great wall from Pelusium to Heliopolis, in order to protect his eastern frontier against the onsets of the Syrians and Arabs, can hardly be regarded as the work of a con-

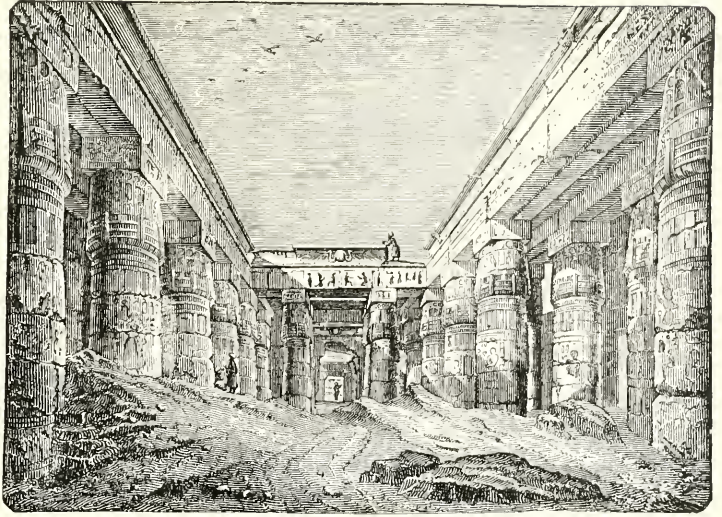


HALL OF COLUMNS AT EL-KARNAK.



queror; and the cutting of a system of canals from Memphis downward to the sea was in all probability an enterprise intended to impede the movements of an invading enemy. None the less, the monuments of the Second Ramses, even when interpreted with a liberal allowance for exaggeration, prove conclusively the greatness of the king and the glory of the age which produced them.

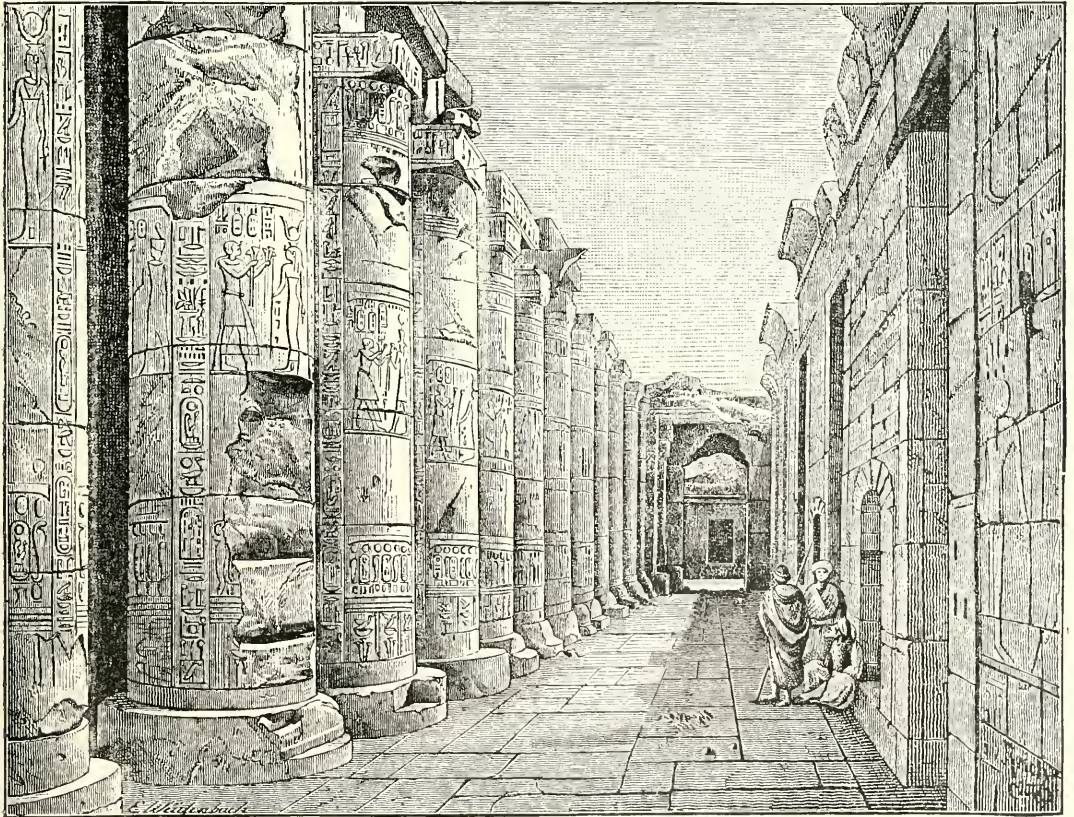
By this monarch was completed the celebrated Hall of Columns, which had been begun by his father at Karnak, as well as the temple of Amenophis III. at Luxor. Before this magnificent edifice were placed two sitting colossi of himself and two obelisks of red granite, one of which still stands with its everlasting legend as sharply



TEMPLE OF CHESNU AT KARNAK, BUILT BY RAMSES III.

cut as in the day of its creation, and the other in like splendor displays its quaint hieroglyphics in the Place de la Concorde, at Paris.

Almost everywhere—in Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt, and far beyond—the monuments



THE TEMPLE OF ABYDOS.



remind us of the exploits and glory of the great king. High up in Nubia, at Abu Simbul, in a valley with perpendicular walls of yellow sandstone, two temples, the one dedicated to Ra by Ramses and the other to Hathor by his queen, are cut in the native rock. Before the temple of Ramses are four gigantic colossi of himself. The statues are seated on thrones, and are over seventy feet in height. The shoulders are twenty-five feet in breadth, and from the elbow to the finger-tip the measure is fifteen feet. In calm serenity



RAMSES THE GREAT.

of expression, truthfulness of proportion, and austere dignity of posture, these great statues are hardly surpassed—perhaps not equalled—in the whole range of ancient art. On the walls of the great temple at Abydos, in a long procession of deified kings, Ramses, as a god, stands glorious; and before the altar, as a mortal, he offers sacrifices to his ancestors and to himself.

Under the munificent patronage of the House of Ramses, the city of Thebes, now the capital of the empire, eclipsed the old-time glory of Memphis. Here the marvelous works of Tuthmosis, of Amenophis, of Seti, of

Ramses II. and III., rising in massive forms on both sides of the Nile, towered in majestic outline around a horizon of more than fifteen miles. Structures of so much solid grandeur have nowhere else, perhaps, been reared by the genius of man.

Ramses the Great was succeeded in 1322 B. C. by MENEPTA, who reigned for twenty years. This king has now been generally accepted by historians as the Pharaoh of the exodus of Israel. The story of this remarkable race begins with the call of Abraham from his home in Ur, near the Euphrates, to his promised abode in Canaan. Here his descendants multiplied to the fifth generation, when Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, with his children and grandchildren to the number of about seventy,<sup>1</sup> “went down into Egypt.” For a famine had arisen in Canaan, and Jacob dispatched his sons to the Egyptian granaries to purchase supplies. Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob, had previously been sold by his brothers into bondage, and had come to fill an important position in the government of Egypt; and thus it happened that the wicked clansmen were brought face to face with the injured brother, who, instead of punishing, forgave them, and sent for the aged father and his house.

The family of Jacob was thus established (B. C. about 1550)<sup>2</sup> in Lower Egypt, east of

<sup>1</sup>It seems a matter of surprise that an event of so much importance (viewed from the Hebraic side of history) as the Exodus should have been so difficult to recognize and fix chronologically in the Egyptian annals. The difficulty in question has mostly arisen from the erroneous date of 1491 B. C., given by the Hebrews as the time of their departure. This date would throw the Exodus back to the time of the Shepherd Kings—a view of the case no longer entertained.

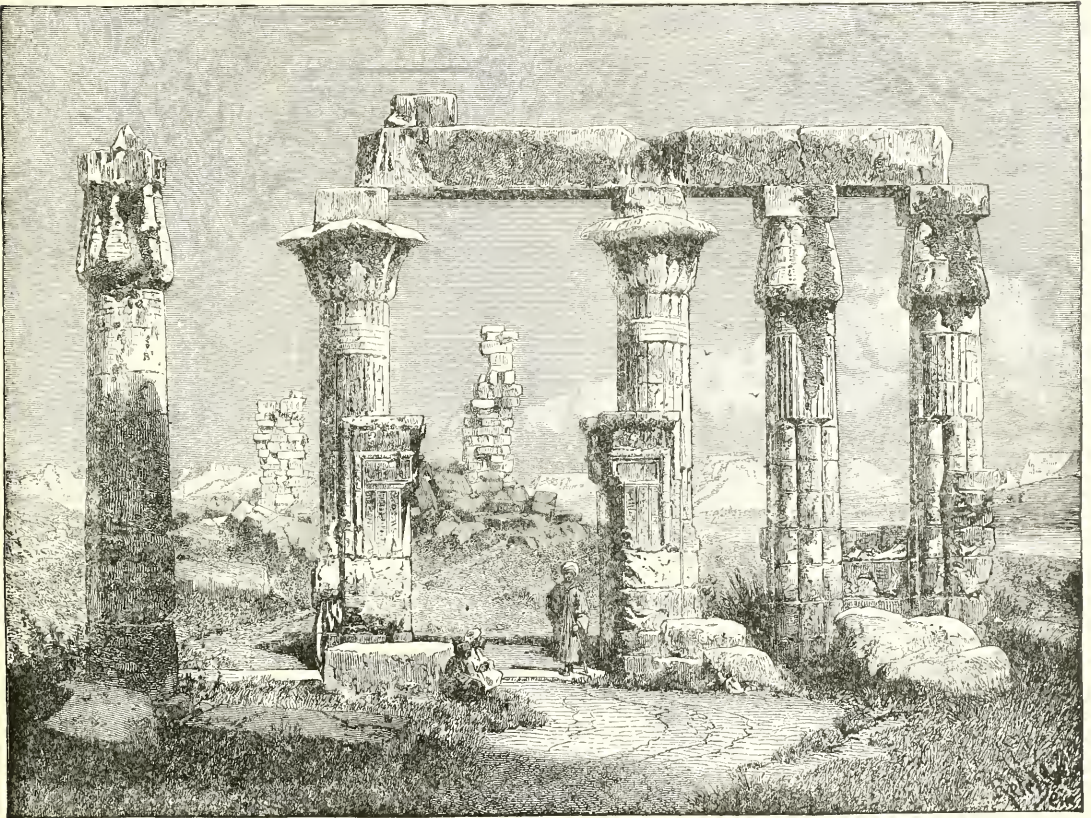
<sup>2</sup>The date of the going down of Jacob has been sharply contested. The event could not have occurred *before* the time of the Hyksos (2001–1591 B. C.), for in that case the Hebrews would have been expelled along with the Shepherds. It could not have occurred *during* the dominion of the Hyksos, for the position of Joseph in Pharaoh’s service, the manner of administration, and the type of Egyptian life described in Genesis preclude such a supposition. It must have occurred *after* the expulsion of the Shepherd Kings—that is, subsequent to the year 1591 B. C. The Author has, therefore, taken the middle of the sixteenth cen-



the Delta and on the borders of Syria. Here they grew and multiplied in "the land of Goshen," or Ramses, as it was called by the Egyptians. The period of the stay of the Hebrews in the land of their sojourn was about two hundred and forty years. For a time the growing tribe was held in honor by the government and people; but under Seti I. and Ramses II. the ruling class began to look askance at the strangers, and then to oppress them. They were set to work at build-

and were beaten by task-masters until they broke out in insurrection.

In the course of time, denial of religious privileges complicated and intensified the rebellion. Moses appeared as a leader of his people, and demanded, in a personal interview with the king at Tanis, the privilege of conducting them a three days' march into the desert to sacrifice to Jehovah. But Menepta replied by charging the Hebrews with a purpose to escape their tasks under a pretense of



RUINS OF THEBES.

ing and digging. The treasure-cities of Pi-thom and Ramses were enlarged by their labor. Perhaps the great canal projected by Seti from the Nile at Bubastis to the Arabian Gulf was carried as far as the Lake of Crocodiles by the toil of the Hebrews. They were sent to sweat in the brickyards,

tury as the best approximation to the date of Israel's colonization in Egypt. He is not unaware that this construction seems to allow too short a period for the development of the great race of the Exodus.

piety. Whereupon Moses, by signs and wonders done in the king's house and kingdom, humbled the monarch and compelled him "to let the people go."

After some delays the Israelites departed along the bank of the canal, touching the principal Hebrew towns, and gathering their population as they went. The route then lay through the Wadi Tumilot, reaching the Gulf of Suez a few miles south of the present city of that name. Here the fugitives were hemmed in by the forces of Menepta, which



had been sent after the retreating host. At this point in the gulf there is a shallow, stretching from shore to shore, almost fordable at low tide. By "a strong east wind," the waters of the sinus were, on the night of Israel's encampment there, driven back to the head of the gulf, leaving bare the sandy bottom. Over this the hosts of the Hebrews, numbering, it is said, six hundred and three thousand men of the soldier age, or more than two million in all, crossed to the other side in safety, which the Egyptians in pursuit essaying to do were drowned. For, the waters re-

clear the land of Egypt of the leprous and unclean.

The Pharaoh accordingly collected all the diseased to the number of eighty thousand and threw them into the stone quarries east of the Nile. Among the victims of this peculiar quarantine were certain priests and learned men, which fact coming to the knowledge of the son of Papius alarmed him lest he should be visited with the anger of the gods for having conspired to drive holy men into shame and servitude. Albeit he saw in a vision that others would come to the help of the lepers and would hold dominion over Egypt for thirteen years. This he wrote on a roll of papyrus, and then committed suicide.

Pharaoh now became alarmed and liberated the lepers from the quarries. He gave them Avaris, which had been left in ruins since the expulsion of the Hyksos. Repairing the city, the lepers chose one Osarsiph, a priest of Heliopolis, as their leader. He gave them laws, enacting among other things that his people might kill and eat the gods, that is, the sacred animals of Egypt. He then bade them fortify Avaris, and at the same time send an embassy to Jerusalem to inform the expelled Hyksos of the situation of affairs, to invite them to an invasion of the country, and to promise them the keys of Avaris on their coming. The Shepherds eagerly accepted the invitation, and came down with an army of two hundred thousand to reconquer the kingdom of their forefathers. Hearing of the invasion the superstitious Amenophis, after gathering a force of three hundred thousand soldiers, forebore to fight, choosing instead to retire into Ethiopia until the thirteen prophetic years of leper domination should pass.

So Egypt was given up to the unclean. The latter held high carnival in the sacred places of the Egyptians until in process of time Menepta came back with a combined army of Egyptian soldiers and Ethiopian mercenaries, and drove the leprous hordes and their allies in a common rout out of the land. And meanwhile the name of Osarsiph, leader of the lepers, had been changed to *Moyse*s.

The next Pharaoh after Menepta was SETI II., who was succeeded by MENEPTA II. Then,



MENEPTA.

turning to their place, the Pharaoh's horsemen and chariots, with wheels clogged in the mire, were panic-stricken and overwhelmed.

The story of the Exodus is told by Manetho, and quoted by Josephus, in terms quite different from the Biblical narrative, though in the main corroborative of the event. Manetho's account is to this effect: That after the accession of King Amenophis (Menepta) he was seized with a desire to see the gods. To this end he took counsel of a certain priest also named Amenophis, who advised the king that if he would see the gods he must



in 1269 B. C., came the accession of RAMSES III., who, in a reign of thirty-two years, brought back the empire to something of the glory which it had under the elder kings of the dynasty. Naval battles are pictured among the inscriptions of this reign. The Hittites and the Amorites are mentioned among those whom Ramses III. conquered in

Pharaoh, descendant of Ramses the Great. But the kingdom was again entering a decline. The day of warlike exploits was past. The inscriptions no longer tell the story of grand deeds and heroic enterprises. Art—except the art of copying—expires, and architecture languishes. Of King Ramses XII. a quaint legend is recited, how, having married the daughter of



EXODUS OF ISRAEL.

war. The Nubians, the Negroes, and the Libyans each in turn felt the terror of his arms. Ten successful campaigns attested his prowess and ambition.

From 1222 to 1091 B. C. the throne of Egypt was occupied by eleven kings, all by the name of Ramses. This period covers the remainder of the Nineteenth and all of the Twentieth Dynasty. The latter began with the accession of SETNEKHT, a certain obscure

the king of Bacthan, and her sister being sick unto death, the father besought Ramses to send him some priest or god of Egypt who should be able to save the life of his child, Whereupon the Pharaoh dispatched up the river in a fleet of boats an image of the moon-god Chunsu, before whom the evil spirit that possessed the maiden was banished and sent to his own place. So great was the covetous ecstasy of the king of Bacthan that for three

years and more he would not permit the effigy of the moon-god to be returned to the sender. Finally, he himself was seized with an illness, and thereupon, being in alarm, he hastened to send back Chunsu to his place in the temple at Karnak.

This epoch in Egyptian history is marked for the presence of foreign influences in the civil affairs of the kingdom. The Pharaohs now generally chose in marriage princesses from distant courts. Foreign settlements became common in Egypt. A Semite colony was established at Bubastis. The presence of Semitic names—Assyrian, Babylonian, Phœnician—gave token of constant intercommunication between the Egyptians and the nations of the East. Several kings of Dynasty XXII., reigning at Bubastis, bore names indicative of foreign descent. Of this sort was SHESHANK I., the Shishak of the Biblical narrative, who founded the Twenty-second Dynasty.

Meanwhile the influence and power of the religious order had increased as the national spirit expired, insomuch that Dynasty XXI., reigning at Tanis in Lower Egypt, was a dynasty of priests. They appeared in public clad in the sacerdotal robes worn by the ministers of Amun-Ra. It was PSUEN-SAN, one of this priestly line, who gave his daughter in marriage to Solomon. But the dynasty was distinguished by no important enterprise.

The daughter of the last king of this House was married to OSORKON, son of Sheshank. The latter became a partisan in the struggles between Judah and Israel. To him fled Jeroboam, escaping from the wrath of Solomon. Later in his reign, after the revolt of the Ten Tribes, he made war on Rehoboam, and despoiled his temple and palace. In one of the inscriptions at El-Karnak is given a list of a hundred and thirty towns and districts which were taken by Sheshank on his expedition through Syria. After his return an important modification was made in the constitution of the empire, by which the office of high-priest of Amun-Ra was made hereditary in the king's family.

The process of disintegration was now everywhere apparent. The employment of

Libyan mercenaries in the army in preference to the native soldiery increased the tendency to decay. A number of semi-independent principalities arose in different parts of Egypt. No Pharaoh seemed able to maintain the unity of the nation. A lethargy, like that which preceded the invasion of the Hyksos, paralyzed both king and people.

The Twenty-third Dynasty, with capital at Tanis, held the throne of Lower Egypt for a brief and inglorious period. At length TAFNEKHT, prince of Saïs, leading Pharaoh of Dynasty XXIV., rallied his powers and revived, in some measure, the waning energies of the empire. But the princes ruling in some of the Egyptian provinces, in alliance with the priest-king of Napata, called in the aid of the Ethiopians, who were already in the ascendant in Upper Egypt as far north as Thebes, overthrew Tafnekht, and established Dynasty XXV., called the Ethiopian. The capital was nominally at Thebes. PIANKHI, the priest-king under whose leadership the revolution had been accomplished, himself a descendant of the Theban house, was established on the throne. But Egypt was really ruled from Ethiopia; and in the next reign the logic of events was recognized by giving the seat of the Pharaohs to KASHTA, a native Ethiopian, who had married a princess of Thebes.

Meanwhile, the claims of the Saïte House were maintained by BOKENRANF, son of Tafnekht, who seized the occasion of the Ethiopian usurpation to raise a revolt in Lower Egypt. But the insurrection was only temporarily successful. For a short time he held the throne, but the Ethiopian powers were rallied by SHABAK and led against Lower Egypt in a victorious campaign. Saïs, the capital of Bokenranf, was besieged and taken, and himself burned to death.

In the troublous times that followed the Ethiopian conquest, the country was broken up into petty principalities, ruled for the most part by native governors, who were virtually vassals of Ethiopia. At one time Queen AMENIRITIS, sister of Shabak, reigned at Thebes; but the power of the local princes was limited, and only for a season. Later in



his reign Shabak, instigated by Hoshea, king of Israel, was drawn into a confederacy of the princes of Syria and promised his aid in a campaign against Sargon, king of Assyria. But the latter, more rapid in his movements than his enemies, bore down upon the confederates, struck Shabak's army at Raphia, only a short distance from the eastern borders of Egypt, and inflicted on him a disastrous defeat, 718 B. C. The Ethiopian king fled into his own dominions, retaining only Ethiopia and a part of Upper Egypt. In Lower and Middle Egypt the native princes transferred their allegiance to Sargon, and thus

ates; but when the Assyrians, one hundred and eighty-five thousand strong, had come into the vicinity of Pelusium they were destroyed by some peculiar visitation or panic which the Egyptians, in common with the Jews, regarded as miraculous.<sup>1</sup> (B. C. 698.) Sennacherib fled to Nineveh and abandoned his Egyptian wars. In the lull that followed the Assyrian discomfiture, Tahraka invaded Egypt, killed Shabatok, and again brought the whole land under Ethiopian domination (B. C. 692).

On the accession of Esarhaddon, son of Sennacherib, to the throne of Assyria, the



EGYPTIANS IN BATTLE WITH THE ETHIOPIANS.

Drawn by C. F. Kilnash.

the influence of Assyria was established in the country.

During the reign of SHABATOK, son and successor of Shabak, the Ethiopian ascendancy was restored for a time throughout Egypt. But at the same time Shabatok lost the Ethiopian crown in a struggle with his rival, TAHRACA. Soon afterward the native Egyptian princes made an alliance with Hezekiah, king of Judah, and joined battle with Sennacherib, the successor of Sargon. The allied army was defeated in Southern Palestine and the princes, one by one, made their submission. Soon, however, they were again in arms, instigated and supported by Tahraka, of Ethiopia. A second time the army of Sennacherib advanced against the confeder-

struggle began anew for the mastery of Egypt. In the year 672 an Assyrian army invaded the country, captured Memphis and Thebes, and drove Tahraka into his own dominions. Egypt was divided into twenty provinces under as many princes, the leader of whom was NEKU, of Saïs. In a few years, however, Tahraka returned, drove out the Assyrian garrisons, and reestablished his authority. But he, in turn, was speedily put down by Ashur-bani-pal, the successor of Esarhaddon. Several revolts were suppressed, and after a time the native princes of Egypt were won over to the Assyrian interest. Left with some measure of local independence, they accepted the yoke of Assyria, which,

<sup>1</sup> See Second Kings xix, 35-36.

on the whole, was less galling than that of Ethiopia.

The dominion of Assyria was already waning in the East. On the North the ferocious Scythians were breaking through the borders of the empire. The Assyrian forces were called home to ward off the threatened danger. Egypt, for the time being, was relieved from the menace of foreign arms. Quick to seize the opportunity, PSAMETIK, prince of Saïs, raised a revolt, quelled the native rulers who opposed him, drew to his banner an army of Egyptians, Tyrians, and Greek mercenaries, set up the standard of nationality, and in a short time established Dynasty XXVI. (B. C. 685).

Under his vigorous rule and that of his successors the spirit of the Egyptians rapidly revived. But the new culture which sprang up after the revolution was no longer distinctly Egyptian. War, colonization, and commercial intercourse had filled the cities, especially the seaport towns of Egypt, with a new class of citizens: foreigners, Ethiopians, Ionians, Carians, Phœnicians, Jews. The new art was no longer the classical art of Old Egypt. The Egypt of the Pharaohs was dead. The language was infected. The outlandish jargon of dragomans was already heard among the ruins of the ancient civilization. None the less, the age of Psametik I. was a genuine renaissance, imitating the styles of Dynasties IV. and V., and adding something to the monumental glory of the past.

Even for warlike enterprises the reign of Psametik is distinguished. Lower Nubia was recovered in a struggle with Ethiopia. In an expedition across the eastern border the power of the Philistines was broken. Nor is it certain to what extent the dominion of the king might have been extended had not a mutiny in his army destroyed his prospects. The native soldiery became jealous of the Ionian and Carian mercenaries, on whose influence the king especially relied, and broke out in a successful revolt. All efforts to reconcile the mutineers proved unavailing, and Psametik was obliged to witness their departure into Ethiopia, where they took service and received lands from the king. The opportunity which

thus for a time seemed within the grasp of Egypt to become again influential in the affairs of the East faded suddenly away.

In the year 611 B. C., NEKU II., son of Psametik, succeeded to the throne of the country. The first years of his reign were occupied with the decayed project of constructing a canal from the Red Sea into the Nile. Commerce was patronized. A navy was built, manned by Phœnician sailors, and sent by way of the Red Sea to explore the coasts of Africa. In the first summer of their voyage, and again in the second, the seamen landed, pitched a camp, sowed grain, and gathered a harvest. In the third season they returned to Egypt by way of the Mediterranean, having accomplished what, after twenty-one centuries, Vasco da Gama, sailing in the opposite course, did with so great toil and peril—the circumnavigation of Africa.

But the monarch in whose reign the famous voyage was made was less fortunate in his schemes of war. Covetous of the prize offered in the East by the decay of Nineveh, he organized an army, marched to Megiddo, joined battle there with Josiah, king of Judah, whom he slew, and then advanced to Carchemish, on the Euphrates. The epoch was in the ebb between the collapse of Assyria and the rise of Babylon. After three years, however, Nabopolassar, the Babylonian monarch, sent out a powerful army, commanded by his son, Nebuchadnezzar, to drive the Egyptians from the land. The decisive battle was fought in 605 B. C., on the field of Carchemish. The army of Neku was utterly defeated, and the power of Egypt in the East forever extinguished.

PSAMETIK II. came to the throne in the year 595. His short reign was distinguished by no event except a fitful expedition undertaken against the king of Ethiopia. His son and successor, UAIABRA,<sup>1</sup> inherited the crown in the year 590, and attempted to carry forward the ambitious designs of his grandfather. Under his influence a confederation, embracing Egypt, Palestine, and Phœnicia, was formed against Nebuchadnezzar, and the fleet of the latter, manned by Tyrian mercenaries,

<sup>1</sup> In Greek, *Apries*; in Hebrew, *Hophra*.



was defeated by the fleet of Uahabra. But the land forces of the Babylonian, advancing into Palestine, besieged and captured Jerusalem, sacked the city, pillaged the temple, and broke the confederacy to pieces.

A still greater calamity soon overtook Uahabra and ruined his house. Undertaking an ill-advised war against the Greek colonies of Cyrene, his army was defeated; and the native soldiers thereupon charged their defeat to a concealed purpose of the king to destroy them and to put Hellenic mercenaries in their place. A violent revolt followed, headed by AAHMES, who was chosen king by the insurgents; and in 571, the forces of Uahabra were routed in battle and himself dethroned.

It is probable that this sudden and comparatively bloodless revolution was conducted by Aahmes under the instigation and direction of Nebuchadnezzar, and that the crown of Egypt was held by Aahmes as a tributary of the Babylonian king. Nevertheless, the Egyptian prince at once proceeded to legitimate his line by taking in marriage the heiress of the Saïte dynasty, Queen Shapertap, granddaughter of Psametik I. He endeavored to arouse the national spirit by cleansing and restoring the temples, encouraging art, and patronizing learning. The Greek influence, however, was clearly in the ascendant, and triumphed more and more. Naucratis became a Greek town with Greek privileges, and the

guards of Memphis were for the most part Ionian and Carian mercenaries.

This encouragement of Hellenic influences was a part of the foreign policy of the king. For he saw with ever-increasing alarm the rising power of Persia, and recognized the instant necessity of preparing for the inevitable onset. This he did with commendable energy. With all of the Greek states he established relations of amity. Croesus, king of Lydia, and Polycrates, prince of Samos, he joined in an alliance against the Persian. But before the storm broke out of the East upon the West, Aahmes died and bequeathed the crown to PSAMETIK<sup>1</sup> III., his son.

Cambyses, king of Persia, was already on the march against the Western confederates. The Egyptian army was drawn out to Pelusium to stay the coming invasion. Here Psametik, who may be styled the last of the Pharaohs, was met by Cambyses, defeated in battle, and driven back to Memphis. In this, the ancient capital of his country, the Egyptian concentrated his forces, and was besieged by the victorious Persians. The city was taken, after a brief investment, in the year 525 B. C. The king was captured and led to death. The triumphant soldiery of Cambyses marched over the prostrate gods of Egypt, and the New Empire, which through centuries of glorious achievement had been the pride of the world, was extinguished. The land of the Pharaohs became a Persian province.

#### CHAPTER IV.—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.



ONLY a few Egyptian books have survived the wreck of ages. And the few that do exist are treatises on Death rather than pictures of Life. The funeral procession, the sepulcher, the ordeal of the soul, the judgment of the gods—these are the choice themes of the literature of Egypt. Whereas other civilized nations have given us in their liter-

ary works a transcript, more or less complete, of the daily life of the people, the Egyptians have left us little more than the ceremonial of the tomb.

But in a graphic pictorial delineation of Manners and Customs the Egyptians surpassed all other races, whether ancient or modern. On monument and temple-wall, on polished tablet and face of the native cliff, on granite obelisk and red-stone sarcophagus—

<sup>1</sup>In Herodotus, *Psammenitus*.

everywhere were pictured the quaint details of common life. From the stony pages of these imperishable records the hopes and fears, the toils and sorrows, the purposes and aims of the people of the villages and fields of Egypt can be gathered as from the open book of yesterday.

In the society of ancient Egypt the king was first and greatest. Above the common throng he was immeasurably lifted up. He was the one source of political life to the nation. From him flowed all the civil and official rights of the people. He only was not bound by authority. He was not subject, neither indeed could be. The double crown which he wore was no meaningless symbol.<sup>1</sup>

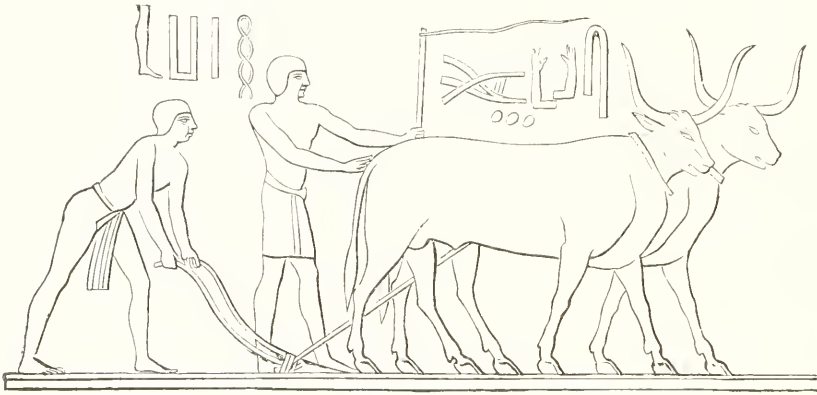
In Egypt every circumstance of the envi-

erence, respect, humility; in Egypt it was an act of worship.

The Egyptian king was a god. He was defined and invoked by all the divine appellations and epithets. He was not merely like the gods, but was one of them. He was not the minister of the sun, but the sun himself, dispensing life and light. He was the mighty Horus; the good god; the master. On all the monuments and temples in perpetual rhythm of repetition the attributes divine are carved with infinite pleonasm. Everywhere the king is the outpourer of life, the mighty god, son of Ptah, beloved of Amun, offspring of Ra, child of the sun, the eternal. The young Ramses draws the milk of life from the breast of Isis, and the goddess Anuke nurses

the boy-king Horus into strength and beauty.

To the Egyptians all this was very real. They believed profoundly in the godhead of their sovereign, and because they believed, worshipped. Before his death he was enrolled with the spirits of his an-



EGYPTIANS PLOWING.

From a Bas-relief of the Oldest Dynasty, Memphis.

ronment conspired to augment the influence of the KING. The monarchy, once established, rapidly developed into a despotism. Herodotus declares that the Egyptians could not have lived without a king. He was alike the principle of social coherence and the fountain of political power. Before his feet commander and nobleman, magistrate and priest bowed in abject attitude. The custom of universal kneeling in the presence of the sovereigns of the East acquired in Egypt a peculiar significance. In other courts it was an act of rev-

erence; priests were appointed to his service; and he himself bowed in worship before his own effigy. Between him and the higher powers no human agency could interpose; for who could mediate between the gods and one of their own number? The priesthood was only common clay before the glory of Pharaoh.

In the discipline and duties of his official life the king of Egypt was quite another creature. In the great work of ruling his people he was the slave of traditional ceremony. Every part of his daily life was guarded by form—each moment apportioned to its place in the royal programme.

How each day the king must live and act is curiously related by Diodorus. The royal ritual is complete. In the morning, first of all, the monarch read the communications and

<sup>1</sup>The high miter or royal cap of the king (see the picture of Ramses the Great, page 64) was the crown of Lower Egypt; the low miter, of Upper Egypt. After the consolidation of the monarchy the two crowns were combined in a peculiar fashion so as to preserve the outlines of both.



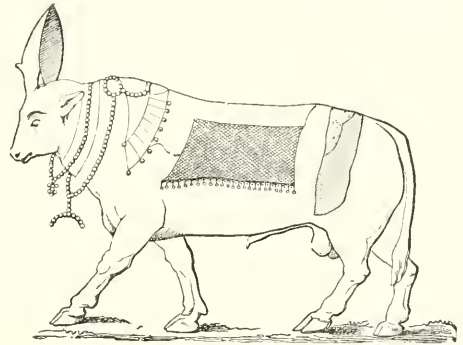
reports sent in from different quarters of his empire. Then the sacred person must be purified by ablutions and the kingly robes put on. Next came an offering to the gods—a sacrifice made by the priests in the name of their sovereign. The high-priest himself offered prayer while the sacrificial beast was brought to the altar. He recounted that the king was a righteous ruler, honorable, just, and pure. He was gentle in demeanor, kind to his friends, terrible to his enemies. If any fault had been committed it was not the king who did it, but the officers of his court; himself was incorruptible. He rewarded honest men and punished liars. He was a sovereign faithful in every duty and pious towards the gods. Might the higher powers, therefore, grant him long life, a prosperous reign, and great glory hereafter.

As soon as the ceremony was ended, the priest read to the king, out of one of the sacred books, the wise sayings and great deeds of his ancestors, and exhorted him to emulate their wisdom and virtue. At other hours histories and poems were rehearsed for the monarch's pleasure and profit. Anon he walked abroad accompanied by his retinue, but must return at the prescribed moment. At the table he must be abstemious to the last degree. Only the flesh of calves and geese might be eaten, with a fixed portion of wine. All crude and vulgar articles were strictly excluded from the royal board. Pure food was essential for the preservation of the purity of the king's life. Even the priests ate no other. How much more must he who is greater than all priests so live as to expel all disorder and evil?

Equal—even greater—care and circumspection were taken to preserve the king from social contamination. Those who composed his household and servants were all persons of distinction. No menial was allowed to enter his presence lest some low word should pollute the royal ears. Educated priests and noblemen conversed with him and with each other in his hearing. They went with him about the palace and on his walks abroad, reciting evermore his father's praises and his own, and laying upon others the sins and mistakes of his administration.

On public occasions the pageants were oriental in their magnificence. The king was borne to his coronation on a throne under a canopy of purple. A score of priests, carrying censers and the statues of the gods, with trumpeters in the van, led the procession. A scribe made proclamation of the great event. Fan-bearers stood on the right and left, and high officers of state bore the weapons and insignia of the king. Behind the throne followed the body-guard, soldiers, and priests, with the white Bull Apis led by his attendants and nurses.

The court of an Egyptian king was composed of a numerous retinue of officers. The government was one of centralized authority.



THE BULL APIS.

At the head stood the Supreme Court, composed of thirty, or sometimes forty-two judges. Ten of these were chosen from each of the priestly colleges—the first at Memphis, the second at Thebes, and the third at Heliopolis. From the thirty a supreme justice was chosen, who presided at the sessions of the court. Upon his front he wore a breastplate called "TRUTH," garnished with precious stones and suspended by a chain of gold.

Before this reverend assemblage were heard and decided all grave questions of state, of administration, of law. The proceedings were characterized by the utmost regularity and judicial fairness. Eight great volumes of statutes at large contained the laws and precedents of the kingdom, and to these the judges scrupulously adhered. After the high officers of the court came a multitude of others. There were bearers of the fan, bearers of the parasol, keepers of the king's bow, officers of the guard, stewards of the palace, treasurers,

overseers of buildings, masters of the horses, keepers of the records, stewards of the granaries, stewards of the royal flocks, butlers, and attendants.

The chambers and apartments of the king were furnished with the gorgeous profusion of the East. The furniture was decked with silver and gold. The horses were richly caparisoned, and the king's barges were trimmed with many-colored sails and gilded till they flashed in the sun. The lounges and beds of the palace were trimmed and cushioned in luxurious patterns, and the royal kitchen was furnished with utensils as costly as they were curious and quaint.

Every thing thus conspired to maintain the popular faith that the kings and the gods were one. When the Pharaoh died he was mourned for seventy days—as though Apis were dead. It was a time of fasting and sorrow. Wine might not be drank or flesh eaten in these days of lamentation. But when a new king, son of the dead monarch perhaps, ascended the throne, then indeed “the sun gave light again”—a new Horus had risen on the world.

Generally the crown descended to the children of the king, with little or no discrimination against the daughters. The constitution of the oldest empire of the world did not admit that it was a misfortune to be born a woman. In a few instances the line of hereditary descent was broken by revolt and usurpation.

Besides the king and his retinue of princes there were few eminent Egyptians. There were no distinguished families in the land, no great generals, no orators, no poets, no statesmen. Even the priests were noted as a class, not as men. All grandeur proceeded from the sovereign—was derived from him. In no other great nation of the world has there been such a dearth of individual achievement. The great names of Egypt are the names of the Pharaohs.

The military caste in Egyptian society was not distinguished for the warlike grandeur of its leadership or the personal heroism of its soldiery; it was strong *en masse*—victorious by its impersonal momentum. The army was well disciplined rather than well organized, and war was carried on with some degree of

scientific skill. The weapons were provided from the royal armories. Helmets, shields, bows and arrows, lances, and swords with curving blades, were served forth to the battalions according to the exigency of the service. The trumpet sounded the march, the battle, the retreat. In attacking towns the battering ram and protecting shed were employed in the manner of the Roman siege.

In the Old Empire the cavalry service was unknown, and war-chariots were not used until after the expulsion of the Hyksos. There were two great military orders—the one called the *Hermotybians*, so named from the peculiar apron which constituted the feature of their uniform; and the other, the *Kalasirians*, from the linen coat which they wore. The former were the soldiers of Upper Egypt and the western part of the Delta; the latter of the eastern Delta and the province of Thebes. For it was a resident soldiery, living independently on lands granted by the king. Each family of the warrior caste had an allotment of about twelve acres—a homestead, the products of which belonged to the occupants. In times of emergency this military order could bring into the field a force of five hundred thousand men.

The favored rank of Egyptian society was the PRIESTS. To them belonged one-third of the lands of the kingdom. They were the holy order in whose hands rested the maintenance of the national religious faith, the conduct of the ceremonies in the temples, the direction of the sacrifices, the work of education, and the general culture of the Egyptians.

By the priests no secular duties might be performed. They were expected to devote themselves exclusively to the business of their sacred office, and to this end they were guaranteed a liberal support. The revenues from their lands, together with certain taxes and contributions of corn, wine, and animals brought for sacrifice, furnished abundant maintenance, and gave the priests unlimited command of time for their religious duties. The performance of the sacred ceremonies was accordingly elaborate and expensive. The ritual was followed with great exactness and regularity, and every minute detail of wor-

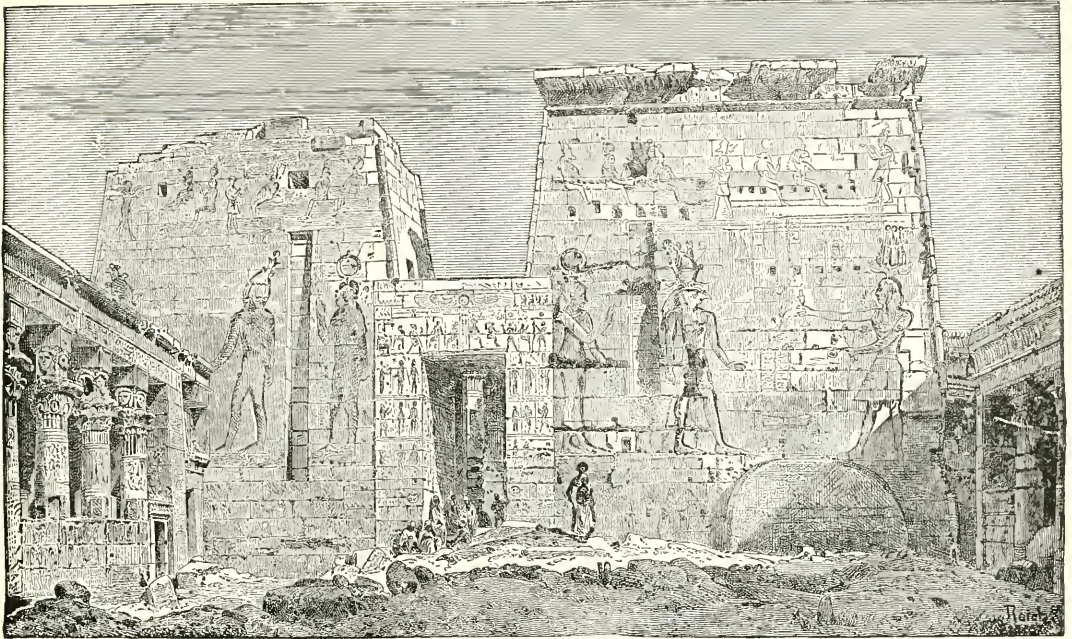


ship and sacrifice attended to with punctilious respect for the scriptures and traditions.

The Egyptian priests were divided into several ranks or classes, according to the dignity and importance of the services rendered. In every temple was one High-priest, who ministered only in the greatest things. After him came the Prophet, who was overseer of the temple; a Scribe, who was proficient in writing and had charge of the property; a Chamberlain, who took care of the images, vestments, and sacrifices; an Astronomer, who recorded the phenomena of the heavens; and

the planets were named and the stars mapped with wonderful accuracy. Here were made the beginnings of that sky-lore which in the middle of the second century B. C. astonished Hipparchus as he studied the heavens in the observatory at Alexandria.

Among the priestly rank the hereditary principle struggled with the principle of fitness. Priests might be, and were, promoted from one rank to another, according to the merit of service; but in general the office was handed down from father to son in regular succession. Five orders were recognized in



TEMPLE OF ISIS, PHILÆ.

a Minstrel, who conducted the chants. After these in rank were the image bearers, the nurses of the sacred animals, the embalmers, and ordinary servants of the temple.

The most famous shrines in the kingdom were the temples of Amun at Thebes, of Ptah at Memphis, of Ra at Heliopolis, and of Isis at Philæ. The high-priest of Amun at Thebes was the high-priest of Egypt—next to the Pharaoh in glory. In the temples colleges were established, and were for centuries the chief centers of the intellectual life of the nation. Here were the seats of “the learning of the Egyptians,” famous throughout the East. Here the sciences grew and flourished. Here

the temples—first priests, second priests, etc., the fifth being the lowest rank. It is recorded of one Baken-Chunsu that, beginning service in the third order, he rose in distinction until he became high-priest of Amun at Thebes.

The discipline of the priest's life was exceedingly exacting. The rules for the purification of the body, for food, and for conduct were rigorous in the extreme. The ritual prescribed that every priest must perform ablutions twice by day and twice by night. On every third day the whole person must be shaven, especially the beard and eyebrows. No clothing could be worn except of linen. The shoes were of papyrus. Woolen goods were abominable. No



priest could touch the hair or skins of beasts without defilement. The animals for sacrifice must first be purified by the attendants.

The priest's food was ordered in accordance with the same strict regulations. No flesh, except that of calves and of geese, might be

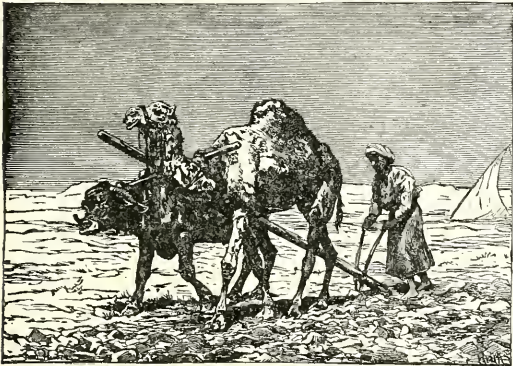


HIPPARCHUS IN THE OBSERVATORY OF ALEXANDRIA.



eaten. Fish might not be touched. Peas and beans were absolutely interdicted—might not be looked upon. The least excess brought defilement and disgrace. The layman might eat what he would, but the priest must be pure and holy. Fasts were frequent and severe. Sometimes for six weeks together the priest would mortify his body in order that the roots of deadly sins might be destroyed. Celibacy was not a part of the discipline, but multiplicity of wives, permitted to the Pharaoh and his noblemen, was forbidden to the priests.

The common people—the Third Estate—of Egypt were divided into three classes: husbandmen, artisans, and shepherds. The lines of division were not very clearly drawn, nor is there much ground for believing that one of these classes outranked the other in social reputation. There is no doubt that the mili-



FELLAH PLOWING.

tary and priestly orders stood much higher in general society than did the handcraftsmen and laborers; but it does not appear that as between artisans and husbandmen there was much distinction of rank. The shepherds and swineherds are declared by Diodorus to have been the lowest stratum of Egyptian society—a class held in aversion and contempt by all the other orders.

A man's place as a citizen in the social scale was for the most part determined by the rank in which he was born. It was not *impossible* that this order should be broken and the artisan become a husbandman, or even the shepherd an artisan; but such transfer of social rank was the exception—not the rule.

In no other country, perhaps, did the he-

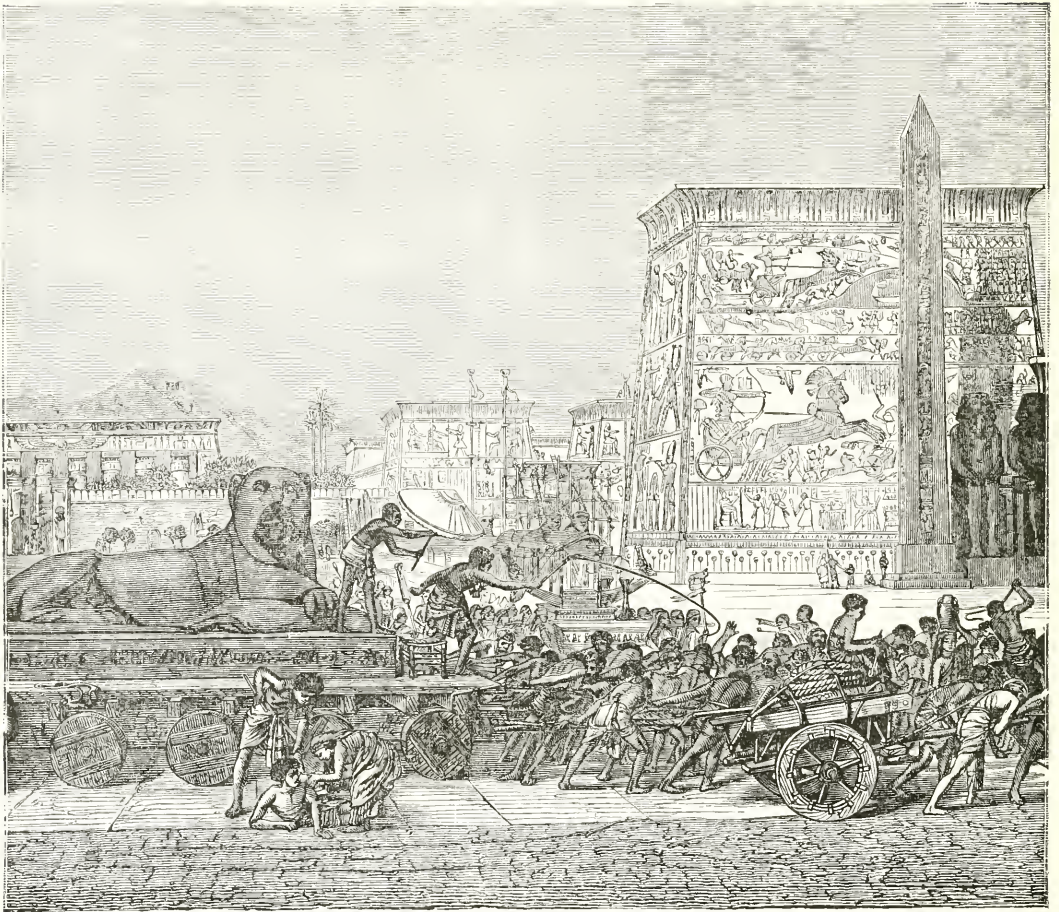
reditary principle go so far towards fixing the industrial pursuits of men as in Egypt. The vocation of the father was followed by the son. One inscription bears witness to the fact that the profession of architect had been practiced in a given family for *twenty-three generations*.<sup>1</sup>

The naturally conservative character of the people coöperated with hereditary influences to limit certain occupations to certain families, and certain families to certain occupations; but it is nevertheless true that in the strictest sense of the term the *castes* of Egypt were not rigid. Intermarriages between the various orders of society were never prohibited, and without exclusiveness in this regard there can be no true caste.

Transitions from one social and civil rank to another were common, or at least not infrequent in all periods of Egyptian history. The inscriptions on the tombs never ascribe any merit to the birth of the occupant, but rather to what he did. Nor was it impossible, or even improper, for an Egyptian to belong to two castes at once. He might be farmer and mechanic, or priest and soldier, without destroying his social rank. The disrepute of the shepherd life has been traced to the fact that the *keepers* of the flocks (not the *breeders* of herds, who were well esteemed) were mostly Libyan and Arabian nomads, and not native Egyptians.

The life of the common people of Egypt was passed with the usual vicissitudes of toil and rest. To the farmer and gardener the fertility of the soil gave abundant rewards for their labor. The greatest drawback on the

<sup>1</sup> It would be an interesting inquiry to determine how far the superior excellence of ancient art is traceable to genius accumulated by the force of heredity. The transmission of skill is a fact that can not be denied; and it is easy to see that if the hereditary impulse were allowed freely to work out its results through many generations, a degree of power in the direction of a certain activity might be reached which would astonish and bewilder by the beauty and precision of its work. Is it not possible that the inferiority of art and design in our own times is in a large measure traceable to the fact that herein the force of heredity is constantly thwarted and broken up by the multifarious and ever shifting pursuits of modern life?

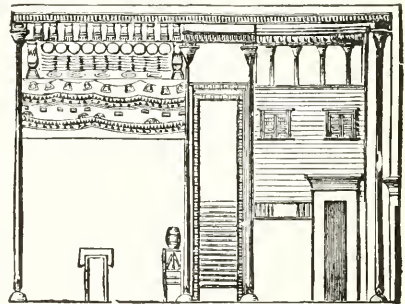


THE ERECTION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS (EGYPT).

comfort and independence of the lowly populace was the fact that the lands belonged to Pharaoh. The husbandmen held their homesteads only by lease, and were thus virtually the tenants of the king. Even the labor of the people might be commanded by the monarch who, for his own caprice and pride did not hesitate to squander on the vainglorious pile that was to guard his withered mummy the toil of generations. It was by the confiscated labor of the people that the pyramids were built. The tasks of those who toiled at the public works and in the mines and quarries were many times cruel and severe. The laborer might be driven to his work with rod and whip, or beaten for imperfect service. The private employer and public taskmaster alike might exercise the right of chastisement over those who were employed by them, and

a thousand sculptures show that the overseers did not neglect to vindicate their right.

Bating the occasional severity of their labor and the fact that Pharaoh owned their lands, the common people of Egypt, for the

EGYPTIAN DWELLING.  
From a Bas-relief.

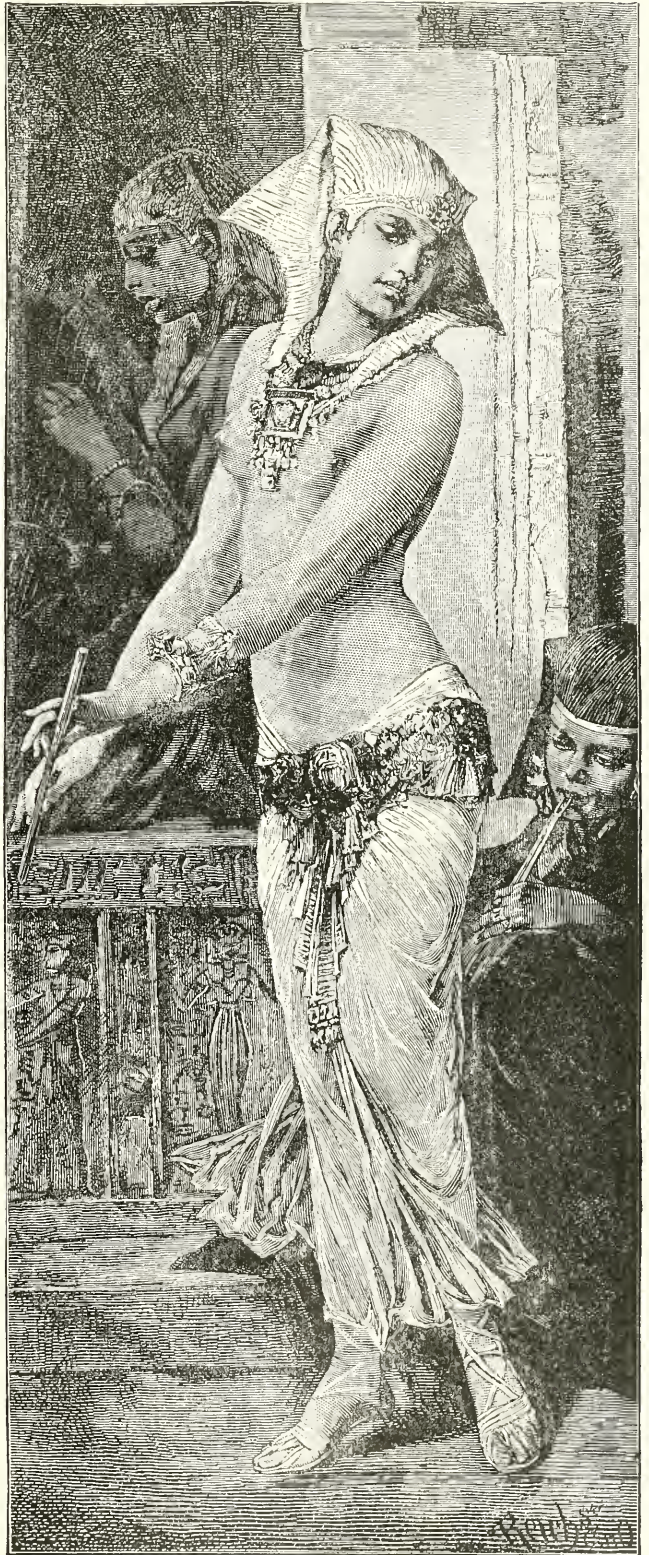
most part, lived a happy and prosperous life. The domestic tie was strong, and the pleasures



of home of a higher order than in any other nation of antiquity. The monuments furnish numberless examples of the tenderness shown by parents to their children, and the manifestations of courtesy and affection between man and wife are so common as to show that the rule was kindness—the exception cruelty. Even where the sculptures bear witness to family jars and social scandals the delineation is generally given in the spirit of humor rather than in satire and bitterness.

As a general rule, the Egyptian home was by no means the abode of squalor and despair. Comforts as great as those found in the peasant-homes of modern Europe were enjoyed by the people of the Nile valley four thousand years ago. The houses of the artisans and husbandmen were generally of brick, and were as well furnished as the houses of the workingmen of to-day, and perhaps better built. In humbler homes the stools and benches and cots were of primitive patterns and rude workmanship; but in the houses of the well-to-do and wealthy the tables, beds, and chairs were elaborately finished and ornamented in the highest style with foreign woods and quaint devices of workmanship.

Though sedate, the Egyptians were fond of amusements, and the various games in which the people delighted are fully delineated on the monuments. The juggler's art was carried to great perfection. It was the delight of the performer to deceive the senses of the beholder of his tricks. Wrestling, jumping, and tumbling were sports greatly enjoyed by the people. The figures of athletes performing feats of strength or boxing for the amusement of the bystanders are delineated in many of the sculptures.



EGYPTIAN DANCER.  
After the Painting by H. Makart.



On one of the walls of Beni Hassan the different phases of a game of ball, involving running and leaping, are pictured; and in another part the performers are throwing a set of balls into the air, catching them in their fall. Of the indoor games, draughts or checkers was the most popular contest. All classes, from the Pharaoh to the swineherd, found delight in this amusement. Dice were thrown, as in modern gaming, the cubes being numbered as at present, but the numbers differently arranged. Many other contests of chance and skill, or both combined, are represented in the paintings and sculptures of Thebes and Beni Hassan. The children were well provided with such home amusements as were calculated to develop the body and divert the mind. Dolls and wooden manikins, with a jointed anatomy operated by strings, gave infinite amusement to the solemn-eyed urchins of the Egyptian household.

Among the higher classes music was the chief delight. Musical instruments of almost every conceivable pattern—harps, guitars, lyres, sistra, flutes, pipes, triangles, horns, trumpets, and drums—are found plentifully distributed among the sculptures of the tombs, temples, and palaces. The attitude of the player is carefully delineated. The military band leads the cohort. The dancers take their places, step to the strains of their own instruments, follow the cry of the caller, or whirl to the clapping of hands. The dance of ancient, as of modern, Egypt, was accompanied with graceful postures of the body and pleasing gesticulations on the part of the performer.

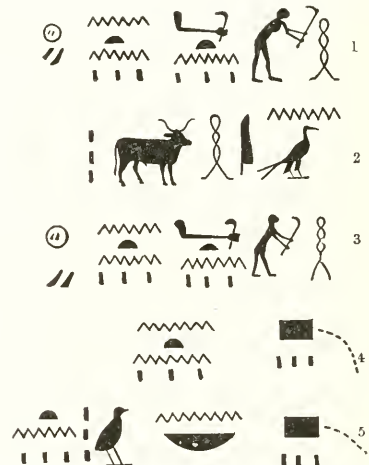
Many styles of dancing were cultivated by the Egyptians according to the diverse tastes of the different classes of society. The dance of the priests differed from that of the townsmen and peasantry, while the upper orders of Egyptian society danced not at all or only in private parties. Nor was

<sup>1</sup> An old Egyptian myth relates the playing of a game of dice by Mercury with the Moon. It was before the birth of Osiris. The stake was the five days necessary to make out a full year in the Egyptian calendar. Fortunately Mercury won, and the five days were accordingly added to the three hundred and sixty.

the voice of song unheard in the Egyptian home. Though poetry was less cultivated in Egypt than in the countries settled by the Aryan races north of the Mediterranean, the musical talent was perhaps more highly developed by the former than by the latter peoples; and the songs of Egypt, though lacking in poetic inspiration, were melodious and beautiful.<sup>1</sup>

The people of Egypt bestowed unusual care upon the bodies of the dead. The races of men have held two theories in regard to the proper disposal of the human body after death. The first is that the mortal part should, as speedily as practicable after the extinction of life, be reduced to ashes; the second is that the body should be preserved and honored as a living guest.<sup>2</sup> Those races among whom

<sup>1</sup> In the fields men sang at the harvest or following the plow. The appended stanza from an "Ox-Song" was sung at the threshing-floor, and has been preserved in one of the inscriptions:



The following is the translation of this song:

Thresh for yourselves,  
Thresh for yourselves,  
O Oxen!  
Thresh for yourselves,  
Thresh for yourselves,  
Measures for yourselves,  
Measures for your masters.

The marks ⊙ and ♀ to the left of verses 1 and 3 signify *repeat*.

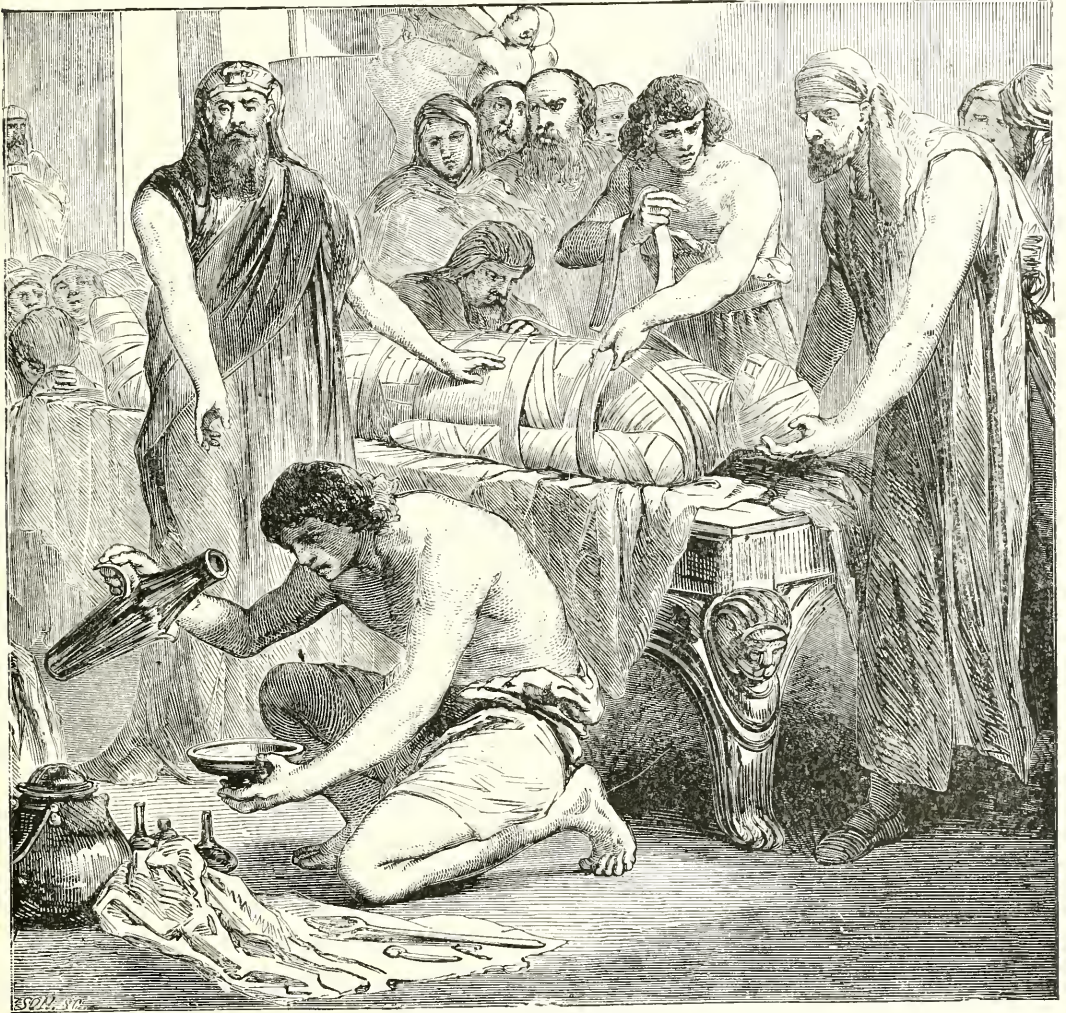
<sup>2</sup> It may be truly said that the system of earth burial adopted by the nations of modern times has preserved all the objectionable features of cremation and embalming, without the merits of either. It is a poor compromise between superstition and science.



the worship of ancestors has prevailed, have adopted the latter view, and for this reason have embalmed their dead. The art of thus preserving the remains of the departed was practiced more generally and successfully by the ancient Egyptians than by any other people. Embalming was as much a profession as the practice of medicine, and the bodies of

third; and among these the friends selected according to their rank and means.

The dead body was then delivered to the embalmers, by whom the brain was removed through the nostrils. Then an incision was made in the left side with a sharp stone. Through this opening the entire viscera were removed, and being thoroughly cleansed by



PROCESS OF EMBALMING.

all except the poorest of the poor were in some measure preserved against decay.

When an Egyptian died the friends of the deceased went at once to the embalmer. By him they were shown a set of models, that is, wooden images painted and wrapped in imitation of the different styles of mummies prepared at the establishment. The models were divided into three classes; first, second, and

washing with palm wine, were covered with pounded aromatics and deposited in four urns. The cavity of the body was filled with powdered myrrh, cassia, and other fragrant substances, and the wound carefully sewn up. The whole body was then packed for seventy days in salt and carbonate of soda, at the end of which time it was washed and then wrapped in linen bands anointed on the inner surface





FUNERAL PROCESSION CROSSING THE LAKE OF THE DEAD.

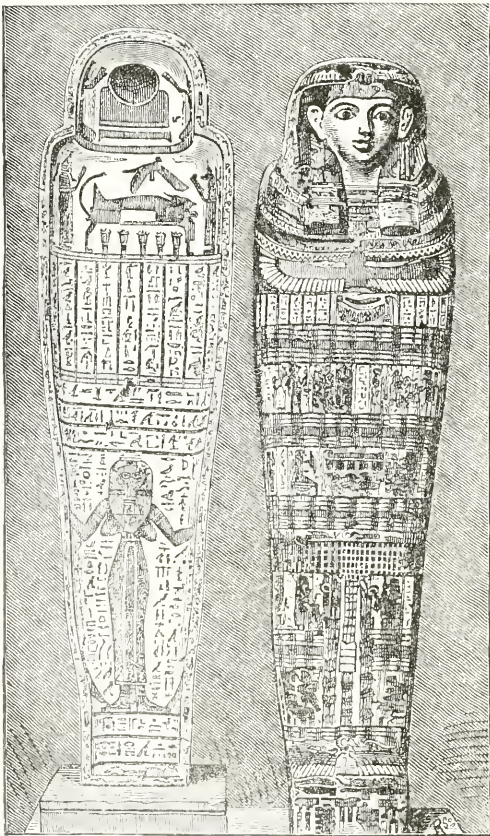
with a certain gum which acted as glue. The mummy was finally put into a wooden case in the form of a man, and delivered to the relatives, by whom it was set upright

against the wall in one of the rooms of their house.

The cost of preparing a mummy in the first style is said to have reached as high as twelve hundred and fifty dollars. In the second style the expense was about three hundred dollars, and the third was so cheap as to be within the reach of all.

In the second method of embalming, the body of the deceased was filled with the oil of cedar, which was of such strength as to dissolve the viscera. After this was done the body could be easily cleansed and preserved by the action of soda and salt. The cavities of the head and trunk were generally filled with aromatic spices, resins, or bitumen—but the latter was used only in preparing the bodies of the poor. When a priest or one of the wealthy classes was embalmed the mummy was prepared with great elaboration and expense. Sometimes the linen bandage employed measured a thousand yards in length; the case was tastefully painted and ornamented with gold-leaf; and the sarcophagus of wood or stone was profusely adorned and sculptured. Such was the fantastic figure of the actor as he quit the stage for the sepulcher.

In every thing relating to the fact of death the ancient Egyptians had peculiar and solemn rites. The ceremonies of the hour were directed not only to the body of the departed and its careful preservation from decay—not



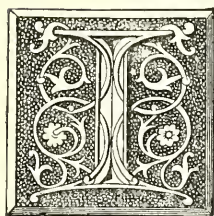
MUMMY CASES.



only to its honorable establishment among the ancestral effigies of the household—but also to such forms and ceremonies as might properly induct the spirit of the dead into the realms of blessedness. The funeral ritual was solemn and elaborate. Prayers were offered for the repose and chants recited for the happy reception of the dead among the immortals. The day of sepulture was a time of

great lamentation. As the mummy of the dead was placed in a barge to be taken across the Lake of the Dead—for it was the manner of the Egyptians to bear the bodies about to be entombed across the water to the place of sepulture—the members of the household, especially the women, were wont to follow in another barge, and with uplifted hands and unbound hair to cry out for the lost.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER V.—RELIGION AND ART.



N the present chapter a sketch will be given of the religious system of the ancient Egyptians and of the arts which they invented and practiced.

The first topic will, it is believed, prove of unusual interest as embodying the ethical and philosophical beliefs of the oldest race of mankind; and the second will hardly fail of like interest as presenting the artistic concepts and achievements of those who were in many respects the greatest people of the ancient world.

The primitive religious beliefs of the Egyptians have not been clearly determined. The oldest monuments reveal the worship of many gods; but the eminent Egyptologist, De Rougè, has been led, from a careful study of the religious systems of Egypt, to affirm that the original principle in them all is the idea of one god. Other scholars, equally distinguished, have decided that the fragments of inscriptions and manuscripts which have been preserved to our day do not warrant De Rougè's conclusion. Certain it is that, however monotheism may have originally prevailed in Egyptian philosophy, the idea at a very early date grew into a polytheistic development; but it is also true that the spiritual concept in the religion of Egypt suffered less by polytheistic degeneration than among almost any other people worshipping a multiplicity of gods. It was the moving spirits, rather than the material forms, of

things that were adored by the Egyptians. Only in a few instances, as under Dynasty XVIII. (see p. 58), was the attempt made to introduce the idolatry of material forms.

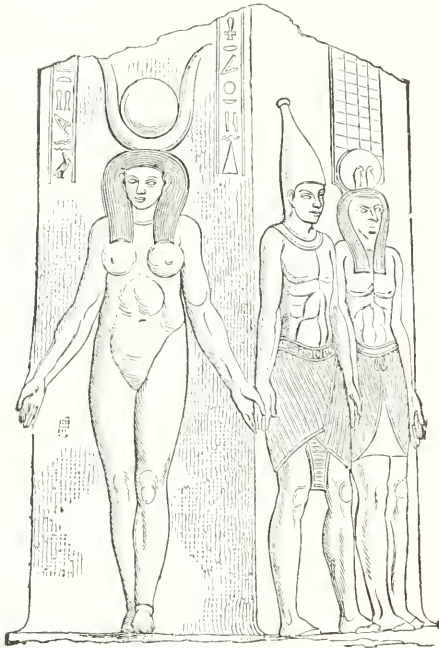
Notwithstanding this high form under which the religion of the Egyptians was presented, it was none the less a system closely allied with natural philosophy. The deities worshiped were regarded as the moving powers of Nature. A knowledge of the deities was therefore necessary in order to interpret the processes and phenomena of the external world.

The first and greatest of the Egyptian gods was PTAH. His principal sanctuary was at Memphis, and here his worship is said to have been as old as the city itself. Nearly all of the Pharaohs contributed to enlarge and adorn the great Memphian temple where Ptah was adored. He was the god of light, of heat, of fire, and as such was worshiped by the Greeks under the name of Hephæstus.

The fundamental theory of the Egyptian religion was that whatever gave life was worthy of adoration. The sun, or the spirit that ruled the sun, was preëminently the giver of life; therefore, the sun, or the spirit of the sun, was a god, and worthy of worship in the highest. This spirit of life and light and truth was Ptah. He stood at the head of the dynasties of the gods. His names were sublime. He was the lord of truth, the ruler of the sky,

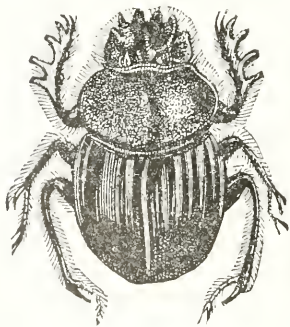
<sup>1</sup> The usage of ferrying the dead over the water to the tombs was much practiced on Lake Moëris, nor is it improbable that the custom originated with the priests of the Feiyoum.

the king of both worlds, the weaver of the beginning, the producer of the egg of the sun and the moon. He was a creative spirit, having the power of both sexes within him-



THE EGYPTIAN TRINITY.  
From a Column at El-Karnak.

self. Therefore was he the Double God, and therefore was the sacred beetle<sup>1</sup> which, according to the tradition of the land, brought forth without the agency of sex, placed on Ptah's shoulders as his head. His body was painted green, for he was the giver of vegetation. In his hands he bore a Nile gauge and a scepter. On a Memphian pillar (now



THE SACRED BEETLE.

preserved in the Berlin Museum), Ptah is defined as the god who made himself to be god, the double being, who exists by himself, the only unbegotten begetter in heaven or in earth. He was the spirit of intelligent crea-

He was the spirit of intelligent crea-

After Ptah came RA. He was the chief divinity worshiped at Heliopolis. He was more particularly the god of the sun, the Helios of the Greeks, and as such gave his name to the city. Sometimes he is represented as a child, sitting on a leaf of lotus; for in the Egyptian fancy the sun of the winter months was a little child. Afterwards, at the vernal equinox, he was a youth; then, in summer, a bearded man; and, at the autumnal equinox, an old man, gray and decrepit. The allegory of human life furnished a symbol for the god. He was borne daily around the world in a boat navigated by spirits who, hour by hour, drew the growing deity to his destined place in the west, and thence over the waters of the under world to his renewal in the morning. "The old man becomes again a child," is the language of the monuments.

In the sculptures of Egypt Ra is represented as a red god, having the head of a hawk. Upon his crest he bears the solar disk. His symbol is generally the hawk—emblem of watchfulness. The sun sees all things. He drives away all darkness. Ra struggles against the gloomy powers, and overcomes them. He is accordingly adored as the victorious, the vanquisher. The worship of Ra was more general than that of any other deity except Osiris, and was frequently combined with the worship of other gods, such as Amun, Num, and Sebek. Thus were produced the compound systems of Amun-Ra, Num-Ra, Sebek-Ra, etc., in which both deities were adored together. At Heliopolis two animals were sacred to this god: the black bull, Mnevis, and the famous Phoenix. For it was from



THE WINGED SUN.

the temple of this city that the fabled bird began its annual flight around the world. The cat and the hawk were likewise sacred to Ra, and the two-winged globe of the sun his emblem. It was from this great solar deity that the kings of Egypt derived their power and glory: they were all the sons of Ra.

While the system of Ptah and Ra—the

<sup>1</sup> *Scarabæus sacer*.



Beginner and the Sustainer of Life—was in process of development at Memphis and generally throughout Lower Egypt, the same myths in a modified form appeared at Thebes. The Memphian Ptah became the Theban AMUN. The peculiarity of the latter deity was that he was the invisible one. He was accordingly worshiped as the concealed or veiled god. He is represented as sitting on a throne, a scepter in his hand and two feathers rising from his crest. By his side stands the goddess Mut, who is styled the Mother and the Lady of Darkness. The vulture was her symbol. In the sculptures representing battles the vulture is often seen hovering over the head of Pharaoh—the genius of protection. In the later development of Upper Egypt the god CHNUM was associated with Amun, and the latter thus came to bear the symbolism of the former—being the head and horns of a ram.

Just as Amun was the Theban development of Ptah, so the Theban ATMU was the counterpart in Upper Egypt of the Memphian Ra. Atmu was a special form of the solar deity. With a slight variation of attributes, the names TUM and MENTU were applied to the same divinity. Tum was the setting sun, the sun hidden behind the west, the sun of the under world. Mentu was the sun of the eastern horizon, the sun of morning and the day. Atmu, like Ptah, was called the father of the gods. He was the spirit of the primeval floods, out of whose mists and vapor the sun was born. Therefore he was called the egg of Ra. His emblems were the sun-dial and the horologe.

Next in the Egyptian theonomy stand the deities SHU and SEB. They were the gods alike of Upper and Lower Egypt, being worshiped with equal zeal at Thebes and Memphis. Shu was light personified. He was the genius of celestial force, and is represented as supporting heaven. In his human form he bears the ostrich feather, the symbol of truth; for light and truth are inseparable. His consort, TEFNET, goddess of heaven, was represented with the head of a lioness—a symbol holding the same relation to the female deities as did the hawk-head to the gods. Seb, with his consort, NUT, was the founder of the great

family of Osiris. Seb was the genius of the earth and Nut of the heavens, and both were worshiped in human form, as were Kronos and Rhea by the Greeks.

The greatest of all the Egyptian myths—the most popular and universal—were those of OSIRIS and ISIS.<sup>1</sup> Isis was the receptive and Osiris the fructifying power in Nature. They were the spirits of Blessing and of Life. Their color is green; for the living earth is green; and the sacred tamarisk, with its perennial verdure, is the emblem of that indwell-



OSIRIS.

ing life which was given by Osiris and born of Isis.

The primitive seats of the worship and lore of Osiris were at Philæ and Abydos. Opposite the former city, on a little island in the Nile, whose every sand was sacred, was Osiris's grave, hidden under the tamarisks. An oath taken by this grave was the most solemn thing known to the Egyptian. Other traditions recorded his burial at Abydos, and the priests of the temple in that city prayed to rest near the tomb of their god. In Lower

<sup>1</sup>In Egyptian, *Hesiri* and *Hes*.

Egypt the worship of Osiris was maintained at Memphis, at Saïs, and in the towns of the Delta.

The most famous sanctuary of Isis was situated at Busiris, in the district lying be-



ISIS.

tween the branches of the Nile, and here the goddess, together with Osiris, was adored in prayers and praises. At the annual festival great lamentation was made for Osiris's death. While the supplications of the priests were made a bull was flayed; the thighs were cut away; the body was filled with bread, honey, and incense. Then the whole was drenched with oil and set on fire. While the flames ascended the people lamented, and what remained of the sacrifice was eaten.

Blessing and Life were good; but there was also Evil in the world. There was a spirit of evil. He was the serpent called Typhon by the Greeks, but the Egyptians called him Set.<sup>1</sup> He was the genius of malevolence. He slew Osiris, his kinsman, on the seventeenth day of the month Athyr.<sup>2</sup> Isis lamented the

<sup>1</sup> In Hebrew, *Satan*.

<sup>2</sup> On this day the sun—Osiris—passes through the sign of the scorpion.

death of her lord; and at the great commemoration a gilded heifer covered with a black veil of linen was exhibited for four days as a symbol of the sorrow of the queen of Life for the god of Blessing. At the end the priests brought out a chest, and the people cried "Osiris is found!" A serpent was slain in effigy, and libations were poured out to the living deity.

Among the sculptures Isis generally appears as a maiden with the horned disk of the moon for her head. She has a scepter with flowers, and the emblem of life is in her hand. In the inscriptions she is honored with the titles of the great goddess and the royal spouse. As to Set, he was burning red in color, and the ass was his sacred animal. He was called the almighty destroyer and blighter. He filled the world with forms of evil—serpents and crocodiles and hippopotami, beetles and dragons and asps. The hot wind that blasted the trees was the breath of Set. The mildew and the blight were flung by his hands upon the gardens and orchards.

Of Osiris and Isis was born the child HORUS. He came into the world to avenge his father. As a child-god he sits on a lotus-leaf, his finger on his lips. As a youth he takes the name of Buto. Then he becomes the strong Horus, the great helper, the pillar of the world. He does honor to the spirit of



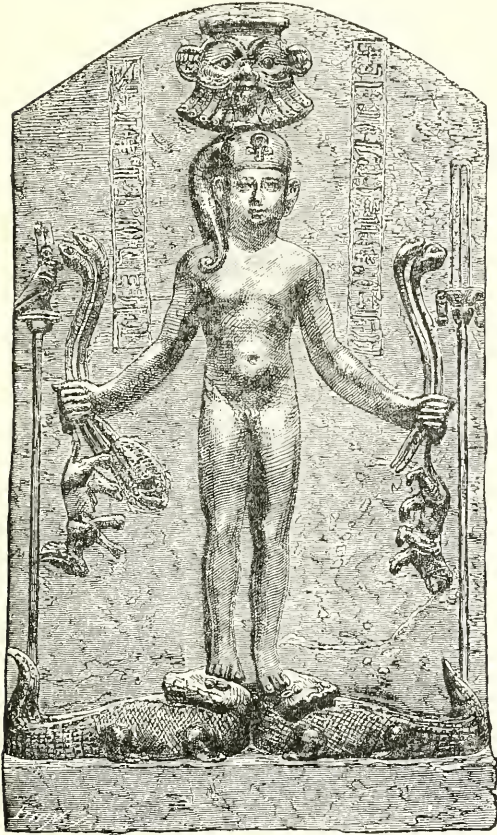
COLUMN OF OSIRIS.

From Medinet Habu, Time of Ramses III.

his father. He is the genius of light. He rides in the sun-boat and stabs the serpent Apopis. He treads the crocodiles under his feet, and in the form of the winged disk of the sun triumphs over the hippopotamus. The wor-



shiper of Horus cried out in his supplication: "Come to me quickly on this day to guide the holy bark, to force back all lions from the land of Egypt and all crocodiles into the Nile. Shamelessness and sin come and appear upon



HORUS.

earth; but when Horus is invoked he destroys them. All mankind rejoice when they see the sun. They praise the son of Osiris, and the serpent turns and flees." Horus was the god of light, turning the gloom of winter into the verdure and life of spring. He was the Apollo of the Greeks.

Associated with Horus was the goddess HATHOR, the Aphrodite of the Greek myths. The principal seat of her worship was at Aphroditopolis. She is represented as the queen of the dance and revel. To her was attributed the power of maternity and the mystery of love. On the monuments she stands with a tambourine, sometimes in fetters. Like Isis, she wears the horned crescent, the moon's disk between. In the sculptures of the

temples no fewer than three hundred and sixty local forms are given to this goddess, the queen of the passions of Egypt.

Among the deities worshiped by the Egyptians the god THOTH<sup>1</sup> held a place inferior to Ra. He was the chief Moon-god, and was represented with the head of an Ibis. To him is attributed the introduction of letters and the reckoning of time. In the conflict which Horus had with the dragon Set, Thoth by his wisdom aided in destroying the serpent. He was the god of knowledge and of art. At the last, when the souls of the dead are brought before the judgment-seat of Osiris, it is Thoth who records the sentence of eternal doom.

After Thoth, who may, perhaps, be regarded as the last of the principal gods of Egypt, came a number of others of less reputation. Among these minor divinities may be mentioned MAT, the goddess of Truth, and her son, the jackal-headed ANUBIS. Next were the four genii called the AMENU, who presided over the process of embalming. Chnum has already been mentioned as associated with Amun in the system of Upper Egypt. KHEM was the Greek Pan, and NIT was a local divinity of Saïs. To these should be added the NILE, who, under the name of Hapi, was believed in and worshiped as the god of fertility and abundance. In times of low water, especially when the annual flood was scanty, portending famine, offerings were made to the great river with the hope of increasing his benevolence. Traditions exist that at such times a maiden, bound in fetters after the similitude of Hathor, was thrown



COLUMN FROM THE TEMPLE OF DENDERAH, WITH HATHOR MASKS, TIME OF CÆSAR.

<sup>1</sup> Various written, *Thaut, Taut, Tamut, Toth.*





THE SACRIFICE TO THE NILE.

Drawn by W. Gentz.



into the tide as a sacrifice of life to a deity that might not be otherwise appeased.<sup>1</sup>

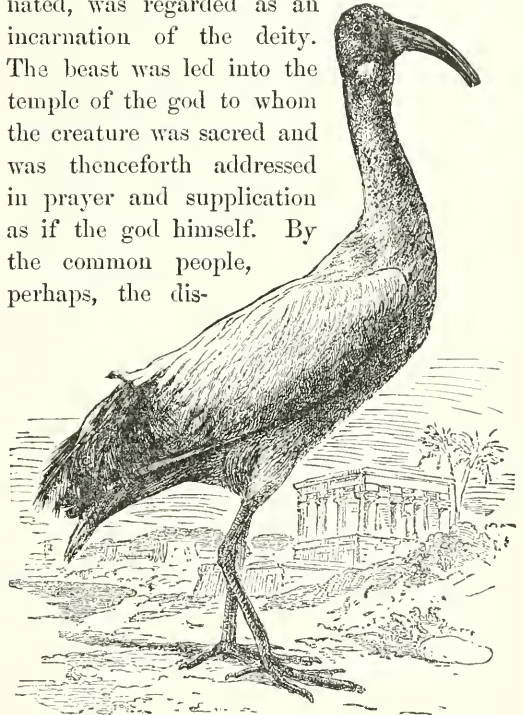
Much has been written of the adoration of animals by the Egyptians. It is hardly correct to say that any beast was worshiped. Certain animals were sacred to certain gods. They were the symbols of the deities—the bodily presence of the invisible principle or power. Perhaps no intelligent Egyptian worshiped the bull or the goat; but the theology of the land, as formulated by the priests and the philosophers, indicated these animals as the best living embodiment of the gods to whom they were sacred. It was through the symbol that the god was worshiped; and since the gods were many, many were the symbols.

To the creative deities—the robust gods of power and mastery—the sacred animal was the bull; and correlative with this the cow was sacred to the goddesses of birth and receptivity. To Amun and Chnum the ram was sacred; to Ptah the beetle; to Osiris the heron; to Ptah and Isis the vulture; to Ra and Horus the hawk and the cat; to Thoth the Ibis; to Anubis the ape; to Set and his later counterpart, Sebek, the crocodile.

Here superstition found abundant material. The sacred animals had a portion of the divinity within them. Any offense to the beast was an offense to the god of whom the creature was the symbol. The sacred animals must be treated as deities. If the city was burning the cats must be saved—they were the creatures of the guardian Horus, who rose to light the world. To honor these animals in the presence of all the people—to cut up bits of flesh for the hawks and stand calling for them to come, or to coax the cats, already replete with delicacies, to take more milk and bread—were acts of profound piety, as it respected the supernal powers. To kill one of these sacred creatures, whether intentionally or unintentionally, was a deed worthy of death. Diodorus relates that as late as the time of the Ptolemies, when the Egyptians were ex-

ceedingly anxious to secure the favor of the Cæsars, a Roman visitor in Egypt had the misfortune to kill a cat, whereupon, in spite of all authority and all fear of consequences, a mob gathered and took his life.

Among the various races of animals set apart to the gods, certain individuals were preëminently sacred. These were known by the priests, and were detected by marks and signs which distinguished them from the common herd. An animal, when once thus designated, was regarded as an incarnation of the deity. The beast was led into the temple of the god to whom the creature was sacred and was thenceforth addressed in prayer and supplication as if the god himself. By the common people, perhaps, the dis-



SACRED IBIS.

inction between the deity and the sacred animal was not much regarded; but by the priests the discrimination was, no doubt, maintained between the spirit and the material form of their god.

As it respected the bull sacred to Ptah and Osiris, the Egyptian theology declared that the first Apis was conceived by the influence of a ray of light from heaven. After this, Apis procreated his own kind, and the priests were able to detect the true god from the undivine herd with which he pastured. Apis was black. He had a triangular spot of white on the forehead, and under his tongue a fleshy growth in the form of the sacred beetle

<sup>1</sup> According to the best historical opinion the belief that human sacrifices were made to the Nile by the ancient Egyptians is without foundation—a fact which seems to render mythical Gentz's striking sketch of *The Sacrifice to the Nile*.

of Ptah. His back was marked with spots of white in the shape of an eagle, and his tail was streaked with party-colored hairs.

When Apis was found he was put for forty days in the meadows of Nilopolis. He was then conveyed in a boat to the temple of Ptah at Memphis. There he was bathed and anointed and clad in the finest garments. Distinguished priests fed him with the costliest food, and precious frankincense smoked ever before him. When, at last, death put an end to the elaborate mockery, the extinct god was honored with a gorgeous funeral upon which wealthy noblemen and kings squandered their fortunes. But the soul of Apis had gone into another, whom the priests were not slow in discovering and restoring to his place in the temple. If Apis refused to die, at the end of twenty-five years he was drowned in a sacred fountain; for the imposing ceremony of a new installation might not be too long postponed.

At that season of the year when the inundation of the Nile began, promising peace and plenty for the year to come, a peculiar heron, bearing upon his crest two long black feathers, appeared in Egypt. The coming of this bird, called BENNU, seemed to announce the fertilization of the land and the return of life. Doubtless, therefore, the heron brought the blessings of abundance; and to Osiris, the god of blessing, the bird was sacred. In the great temple of Heliopolis the heron was consecrated as the great Bennu of On, the self-begotten creature who caused the divisions of time to men.

Closely connected with this myth was the more famous one of the PHŒNIX. The legend recites that, once in every five hundred years, a great bird, gold-colored and red, and shaped like an eagle, came out of Arabia to the temple of the sun in Heliopolis. Here in the sanctuary of the sun-god the winged creature buried the corpse of his father, embalmed in myrrh. On reaching the age of five hundred years, the phoenix prepared a funeral pile and burned himself upon it. Then out of the ashes he rose by recreation of himself and bore away the remains of his old body to Heliopolis. The phoenix was sacred to Osiris; and the fable is no doubt the mythical ex-

pression of the completion of some astronomical cycle, perhaps the return of the planets to a given aspect. The planet Venus is called on the Egyptian monuments, "the Star of Bennu-Osiris."

To Ra of Heliopolis the male cat was sacred, and the female to Pasht—the divinity of Bubastis.<sup>1</sup> In like manner the vulture of Mut, the ibis of Thoth, and the hawk of Horus, were set apart as objects of popular veneration and priestly care. When these animal gods died their bodies were generally embalmed with as much care as those of men of the highest rank. The mummies of the holy creatures—bulls, cows, jackals, dogs, cats, vultures, hawks, ibises, herons, and even crocodiles—are found abundantly scattered among the sacred rubbish of Thebes, Abydos, Memphis, Bubastis, and Hermopolis.

The faith of Egypt was not, however, wholly given up to incongruous myths and absurd symbolism. Mixed with the materialistic degeneration of the national religion were many concepts approximating the best beliefs of the ages. Everywhere there was the recognition of a difference between soul and body. The spiritual nature of man was clearly apprehended. Immortality was accepted as a thing taken for granted. Osiris had the power of awakening life out of death. He was the god of the human soul and of everlasting life. There was an invisible world where the spirits of men, eternal and indestructible, dwelt under the dominion of Osiris.

After death the human soul was believed to descend with the setting sun under the world. Here, in a place called the hall of Double Justice, on the Day of Justifica-

<sup>1</sup> As a specimen of the hymnody of Egypt the following chant to the male cat of Ra may be given: "Thy head is the head of the Sun-god; thy nose is the nose of Thoth, the twice mighty lord of Hermopolis. Thy ears are the ears of Osiris, who hears the voice of all who call upon him. Thy mouth is the mouth of Tum, who has preserved thee from every stain. Thy heart is the heart of Ptah, who has purified thee from every taint of evil in thy parts. Thy teeth are the teeth of the Moon-god; and thy thighs are the thighs of Horus, who avenged the death of his father, and retaliated upon Set the evil which he purposed against Osiris."



tion, the soul is examined and its actions weighed. Osiris is on the throne. With a crown on his head, surrounded with lotus-flowers springing out of the water of life, he holds the whip and the crozier. Anubis, the leader and keeper of the dead, and Horus, the god of life, handle the balance, while forty-two spirits, sitting beside Osiris, watch the weighing of the spirit and its deeds. The

a hypocrite, or a liar; he has not taken the property of the gods; he is not a drunkard; he has not slandered his neighbor; he has not slighted his father or the king; he has not babbled; he has not despised the gods, or stolen the wrappings of the dead. If the heart in the scale outweighs the feather, the soul is acquitted. His heart is given him again. His body is deified. Hathor and Nut,



THE TEMPLE OF ISIS.—ISLAND OF ELEPHANTINE.

heart of the dead is put into one scale and an ostrich feather—symbol of truth and justice—into the other; and while one of the gods stands ready to record the result, the dead himself recites the acts which are likely to justify him in the presence of the deities. None of the forty-two sins has he committed. He has done no wicked thing; he has not murdered; he has not stolen; he has not prayed that he might be seen; he has not been

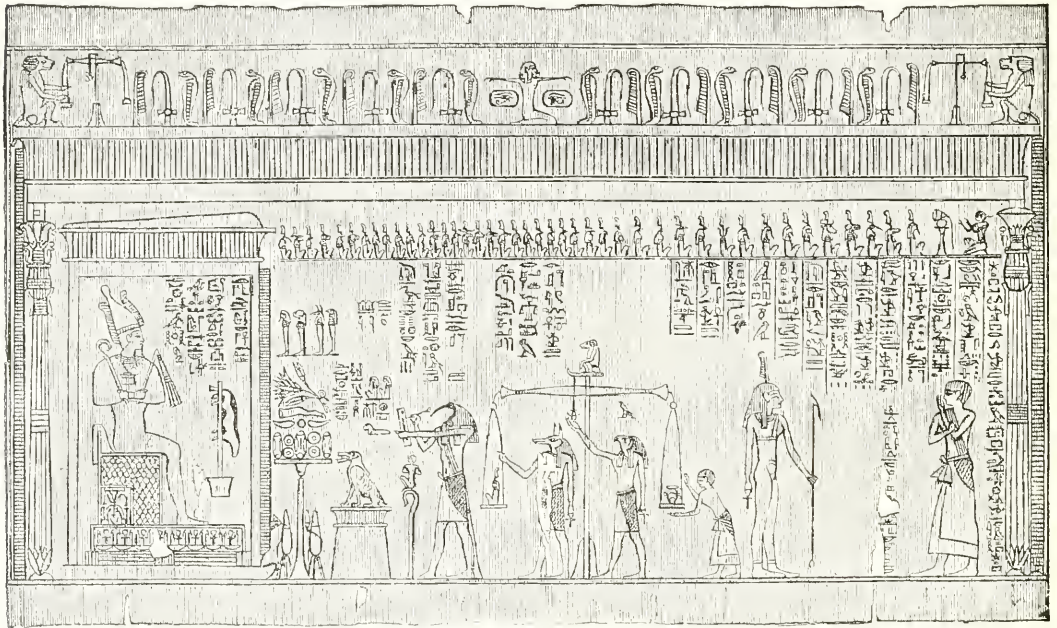
goddesses of life and the sky, pour upon him the living water, and he passes into the dwellings of the immortals. As it respects the fate of the soul when the heart of the dead was outweighed by the feather, the Egyptian monuments are silent. No clue has as yet been found to throw light on this important part of the national faith; but a legend recited by Herodotus points to metempsychosis as the destiny of the wicked. The impure



soul is driven into an animal, and thence into another, in earth, or air, or sea, until after three thousand years of transmigrations it is again admitted into a human body and a second time born into the world.

In the practical ethics of life the ancient Egyptians do not suffer by comparison with the other nations of antiquity. Affairs of business appear to have been transacted with more than the usual care and honesty. The people were cautious in incurring obligations, and generally punctilious in fulfilling them. There was nearly always something of a relig-

The lawyer must necessarily be versed to a certain extent in the lore and traditions of the priests. It was religious considerations, indeed, rather than conflicting secular interests, that broke the harmony of the Egyptian state, and introduced the spirit of faction. The enmities between the towns were generally based on hostile religious creeds. In one city the people would slay and eat the animal which in another was held most sacred; and the people of the second city would return the compliment by killing and eating the gods of the first. In a third town the sacred beasts



JUDGMENT OF THE DEAD.

From the Turin Papyrus.

ious sanction to the business of man with man. The duties and courtesies of life, especially such as appertained to domestic ties and social relations, were observed with more sincerity and good faith than among most other nations of antiquity. In the Egyptian villages and towns there was very little brawling and disorder. The administration of justice, in both civil and criminal causes, was speedy, regular, and impartial. Affidavits and pleas were carefully prepared in writing, and the pettifogger was frowned out of court.

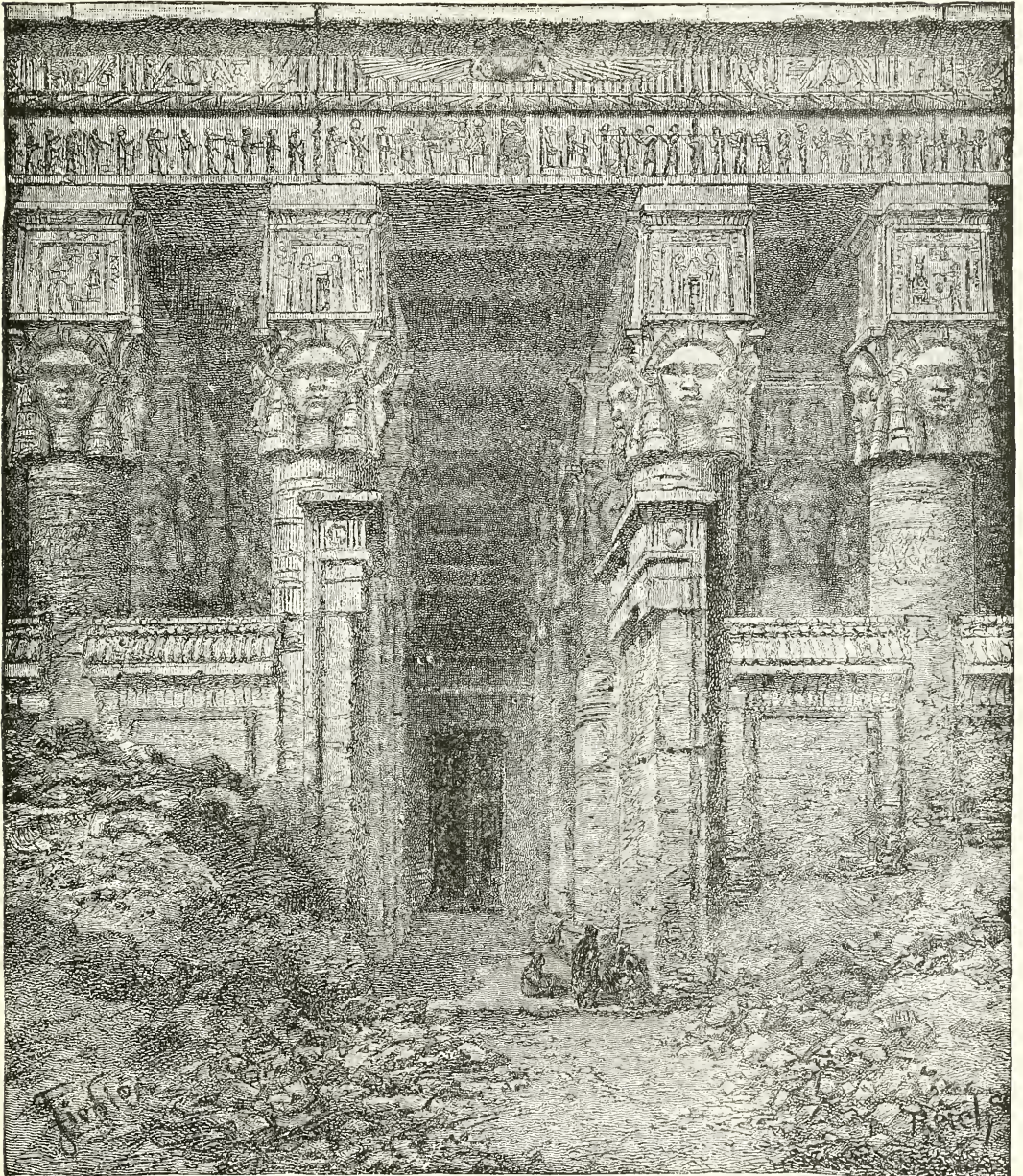
Albeit, it was the religious bias of the law which complicated and embarrassed its practice.

of a fourth would be destroyed as a pest, and so on through the whole round of counter idolatries. The goat of Mendes was hardly regarded as sacred beyond the limits of that city. At Cynopolis the dog was worshiped, and at Lycopolis the wolf; and the Cynopolites and Lycopolites mutually murdered each other's deities. The people of Dendera hunted and destroyed the crocodile, sacred at Kom Ombo; the Mendesiens ate the holy sheep of Thebes; and the Lycopolites did the same thing, following the example of their god, the wolf. These sacrilegious acts were the basis of innumerable feuds and mutual



detestation between the different sections of the country. A people who could build the pyramid of Khufu and carve the statue of Amenemha III. could not purify their creed

sense in man is deeply impressed with the mysteries of the national faith, and this sense, struggling for expression, carves in the rock the forms of the gods—the symbols and em-



TEMPLE OF DENDERA.

from folly, or their practices from gross superstition.

The ART of a people is generally closely related to their system of religion. In the earlier stages of civilization the imaginative

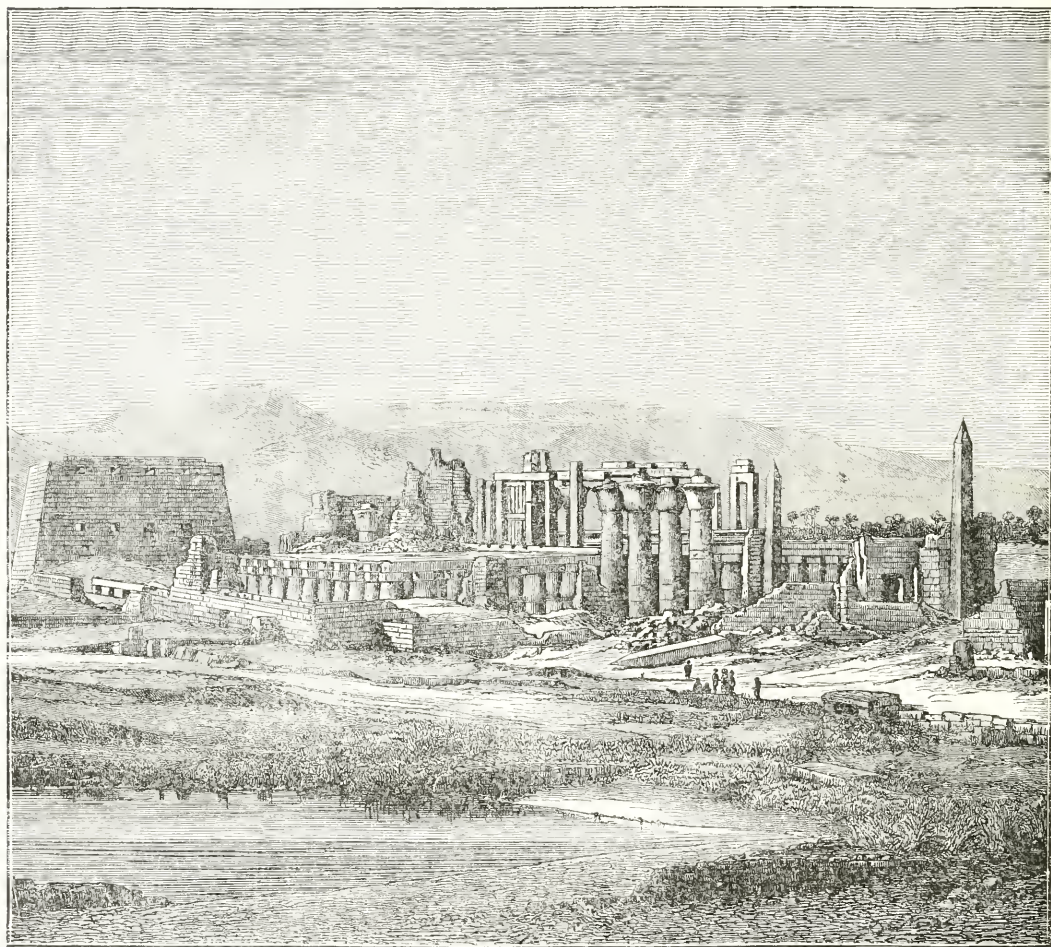
blems of the powers unseen. The generations following improve upon the first rude models, and the coming ages copy and imitate the work of the ages that have preceded them.

Moreover, the houses of the gods must be



grander and nobler structures than the houses of men. Magnificent temples, such as that at Thebes, of whose splendor the ruins of El-Karnak and Kom Ombo still preserve the dim and glorious tradition, spring up, exhaled from the pious spirit of the epoch, and the lofty fresco, with its infinite allegories tells the story of aspiration and hope. It is only

Egyptians displayed no small degree of good taste and skill. The dwellings of the common people were generally square and two stories in height, with an open gallery above. The materials used were sun-dried bricks laid in bitumen, the columns of support and related parts being generally of wood. The rooms were ranged around the three—sometimes all



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE AT KARNAK.

in the later developments of ancient societies that art was in some measure divorced from religion and made to do service in the secular affairs of men. These tendencies are well illustrated in the art-history of ancient Egypt.

Among the Egyptians, ARCHITECTURE held the most important place. The art of building so as to secure permanence and beauty was successfully cultivated from a very early epoch. In the construction of ordinary houses the

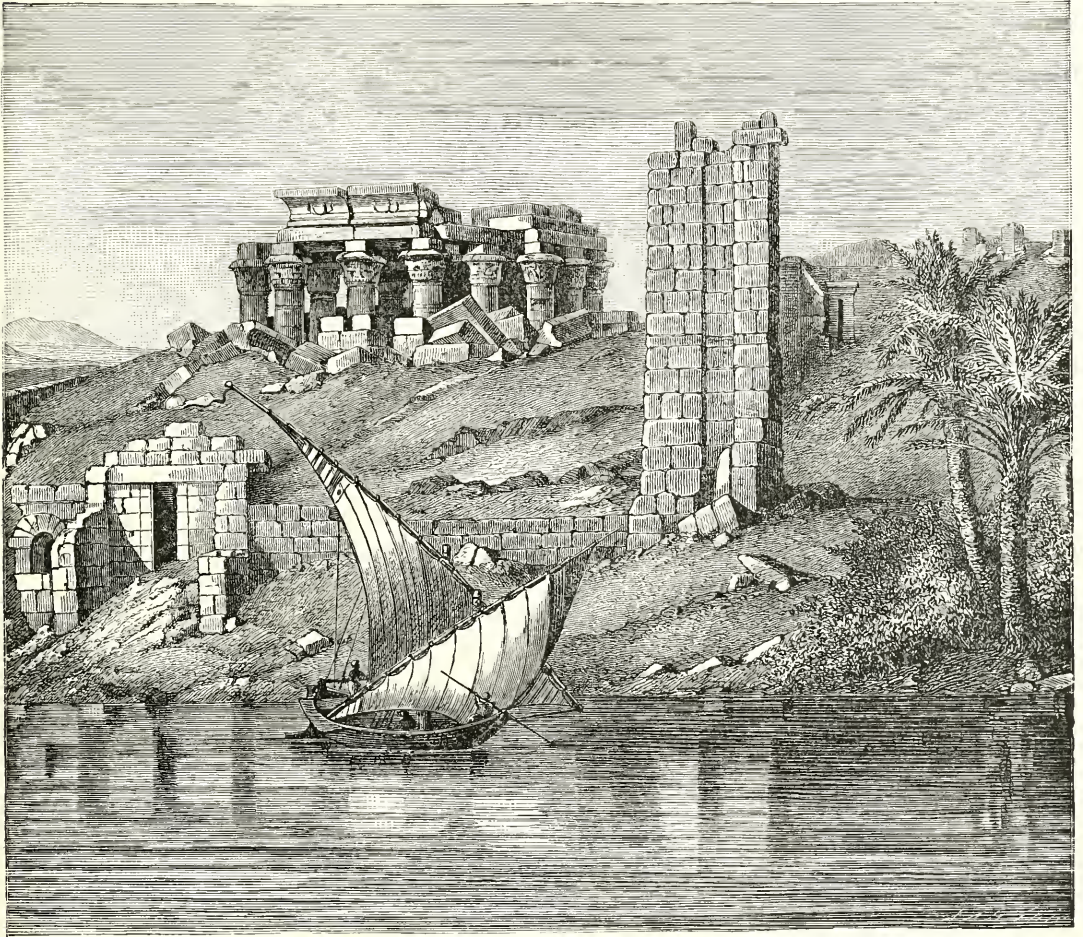
four—sides of an open square or court-yard. In this trees were planted, cisterns dugged, and fountains constructed according to the wealth and taste of the owner. In the more aristocratic mansions were inclosed two courts, an outer and an inner—the latter being for the use of the women of the household and their intimate friends. Without, the entrance to the dwelling was between two pillars and by way of a porch, which generally contained



the name of the proprietor and the traditions of the family sculptured in hieroglyphics. The roofs of the houses were flat, and through these ventilating shafts, provided with large, square fans to catch the wind, were carried into the apartments below. The ceilings of the better sort of houses were frequently stuccoed with a considerable degree of skill, and

*Syenite*, one of the best building materials in the world. Others furnished porphyry, limestone, and sandstone, and still others inexhaustible stores of granite. It was of these well-nigh imperishable materials that the builders of ancient Egypt reared their temples and palaces and tombs.

The ability to work in stone was preëm-



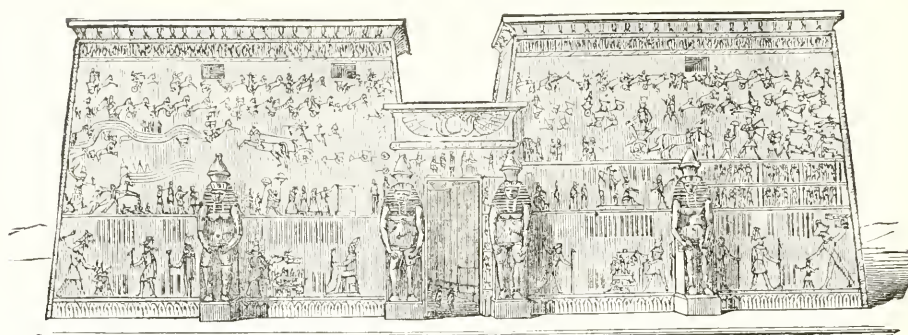
RUINS OF KOM OMBO.

ornaments were employed in the various parts according to the fancy and wealth of the owner.

The public edifices of Egypt were built of stone. In these structures were attained a grandeur and magnificence hardly surpassed in ancient or modern times. The valley of the Nile, especially in its upper course, was rich in quarries. Those at Syene have given name to the famous crystalline rock called

inently an art of the Egyptians. No other people have handled the obdurate strata of Nature's rocky bed with equal ease and skill. In most countries the carving of granite has been regarded as a difficult or impossible work; but to the ancient Egyptian sculptor this hard and unyielding rock was only as so much soapstone which he carved and figured at his will. Sculptures and hieroglyphics were scattered everywhere with a profusion

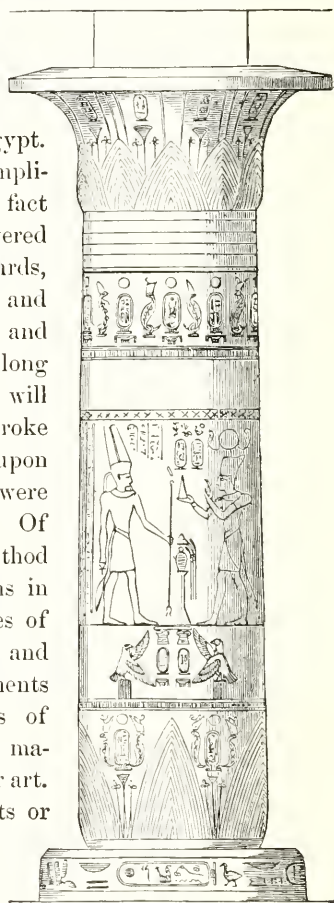




FAÇADE OF AN EGYPTIAN TEMPLE (RESTORED).

indicative of perfect ease in the management of the hardest substances; but the means by which such marvelous results were reached have never been ascertained. It is not even known that the Egyptians were acquainted with the use of iron and steel. To suppose that they were not, heightens our wonder at the work which they

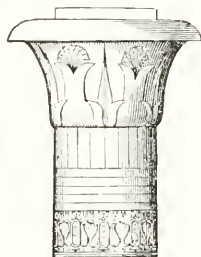
achieved. To suppose that they were, seems inconsistent with the fact that no steel implement has been found among the ruins of Egypt. And what still further complicates the problem is the fact that the bronze chisels discovered in the quarries and stone-yards, though perfectly edged and sharp as new when found, and battered on the top from long service under the hammer, will not now bear a single stroke against the very granite upon which it is evident they were



COLUMN FROM THEBES.



COLUMN FROM BENI-HASSAN.



COLUMN FROM KOM OMBO, 200 B. C.



COLUMN FROM MEDINET-HABU.



PROTODORIC COLUMN FROM BENI-HASSAN.

formerly used, without turning the edge and becoming useless. Of the many conjectures which have been offered to explain the method employed by the Egyptians in cutting the hardest varieties of stone, not one seems clear and satisfactory. The monuments furnish ample illustrations of the manner in which the masons and sculptors plied their art. The workman kneels or sits or stands before the block; he lifts the hammer in his right hand, and with the left holds the chisel to the face of the stone; but how should a chisel of bronze make any impression on a slab of granite?

The public buildings of the Egyptians were elaborately, even profusely, sculptured. The monuments, likewise, bore upon their exposed parts, as



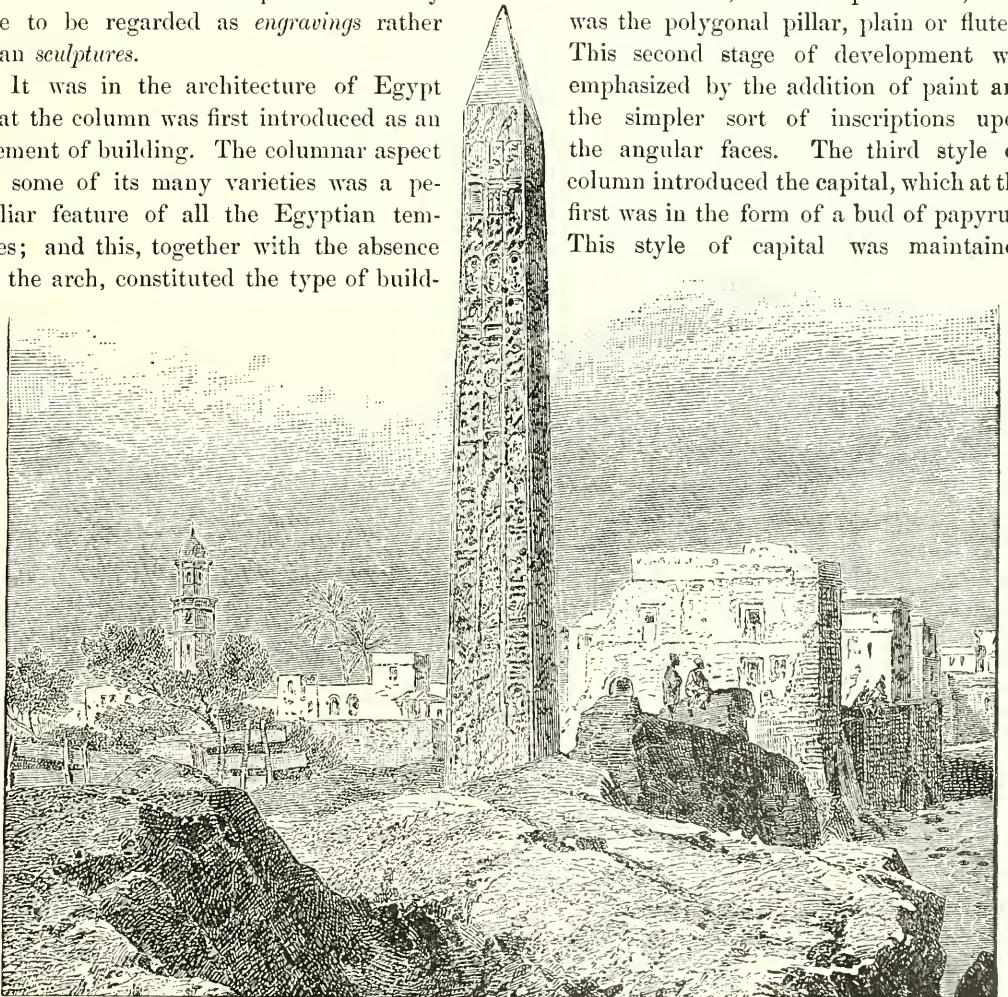
on the faces of obelisks, and still more notably in their chambers and vaults, an endless variety of carved figures and inscriptions. Nor were these sculptures and hieroglyphics so executed as to leave the impression of great labor expended and time consumed in the work. On the contrary, every thing points to the conclusion that these seemingly impossible carvings were regarded as easy and commonplace achievements. The figures and hieroglyphics are elaborately embossed and counter-sunk in a manner which is astounding to a modern worker in granite; and the edges of the inscriptions, after the disasters of forty centuries, are as sharp and beautifully delineated as though they were the work of yesterday. Such is the perfection of these marvelous inscriptions that they are to be regarded as *engravings* rather than *sculptures*.

It was in the architecture of Egypt that the column was first introduced as an element of building. The columnar aspect in some of its many varieties was a peculiar feature of all the Egyptian temples; and this, together with the absence of the arch, constituted the type of build-

ing which prevailed in the Nile valley for more than two thousand years.

It is a matter of great surprise that a people so skillful in architectural work should have been unacquainted with the uses of the arch as an element of beauty and strength; but with a few rare exceptions of the minor sort—and these generally in the vaulted passages of tombs or other subterranean structures—the arch seems to have been unknown. Of columns there were eight varieties, all traceable in their ultimate analysis to the square uncarved pier or pillar. This, indeed, when ornamented with a single line of hieroglyphics running down the middle of the faces, may be regarded as the first and oldest style of column found in Egypt.

The second, so-called protodoric, form was the polygonal pillar, plain or fluted. This second stage of development was emphasized by the addition of paint and the simpler sort of inscriptions upon the angular faces. The third style of column introduced the capital, which at the first was in the form of a bud of papyrus. This style of capital was maintained



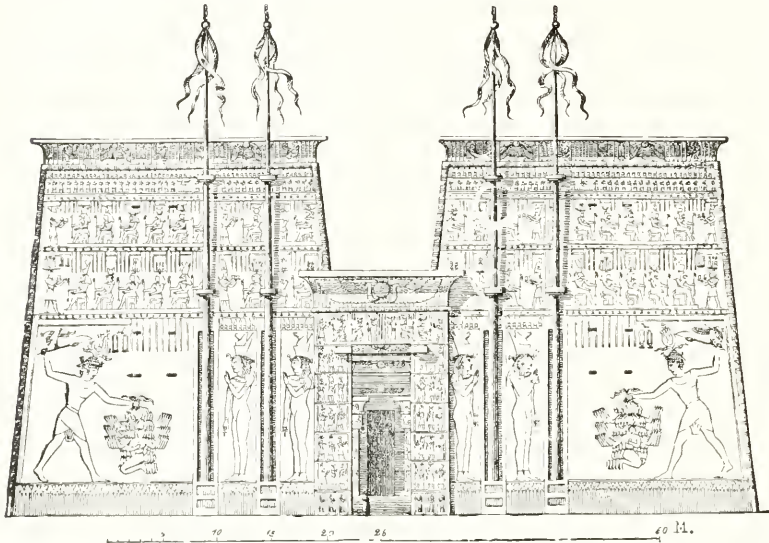
OBELISK OF ALEXANDRIA.

through several dynasties, during which time the column itself passed through successive modifications, until, in the epoch of Amen-emha III., it became a round shaft rounded in at the base. In the fourth order the capital, known as the lotus capital, took the form of an inverted bell, with ornaments so undercut as to be seen only from immediately beneath; and this style in turn gave place to the palm-tree column, so named from its resemblance to the palm with the lower branches lopped away. In the sixth order the crown of the palm used in the capital gave place to the head of Isis, or that of Hathor, the Egyptian Venus. This style was much employed

In statuary the Egyptian artists have never been surpassed. Not, however, in carving the graceful forms of airy sprites and nymphs, but rather in the colossal grandeur of heroic figures did Egypt surpass the art of other nations. The great statues of the kings—colossi, sphinxes, gods—have been already mentioned and described in the different parts of the history to which they more particularly pertained. It need only be added that in giving to figures in stone an air of solemn dignity and everlasting repose the Egyptian sculptors have excelled the artists of every other age and clime.

As related to the other monuments, the

obelisks of Egypt are deserving of special mention. They were in the nature of memorial stones, set up to commemorate some important event—the coronation of a new Pharaoh, a proclamation by him, a victory over invaders, the building of a city or temple. The obelisks are of granite or syenite, four-square, tapering, polished, covered with hieroglyphics, and from eight to over one hundred feet in height.



SCULPTURED FACADE OF THE TEMPLE OF EDFU, TIME OF THE PTOLEMIES.

under the House of Ramses, whose architects sometimes substituted for the head of Isis or Hathor that of a cow with long reverted horns. The seventh order was composite, the columns being round, and the capitals a mixture of former types—the bell, the palm-crown, and the Isis-head being frequently combined in a single capital. The eighth order is known as the Osiride variety, so called from the figures of Osiris set in the front of the pillar which served as a column of support. Sometimes the statues of other gods or of kings were substituted for the figure of Osiris.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The height of the Egyptian columns varied from fifteen feet to sixty feet, and the diameter from two feet four inches to about twelve feet—the

They generally stand in pairs before the city gate or entrance to temple.

In the spoliation of Egypt these quaint monumental stones have been taken by gift, purchase, or robbery to distant climes and nations. The Roman emperors carried some of them to the Eternal City; one stands in the Place de la Concorde, at Paris; one interests London; and another, its mate—both from Alexandria—adorns the Central Park at New York.








































































Of those arts which tended to humanize the people, WRITING held the highest place among the Egyptians. The system which they employed, though extremely complicated largest being of the fourth order, found in the temple at Karnak.



and laborious, was cultivated at an earlier date and to a fuller extent than by any other race of men. Within the present century the treasures of the hieroglyphics have been unlocked, and the mystery which surrounded

est of these it is evident that pictorial symbols were used to represent ideas; but at what date the ideographs or picture-writing proper flourished, and under what circumstances it gave place to an improved style of conveying thought, can not now be known.

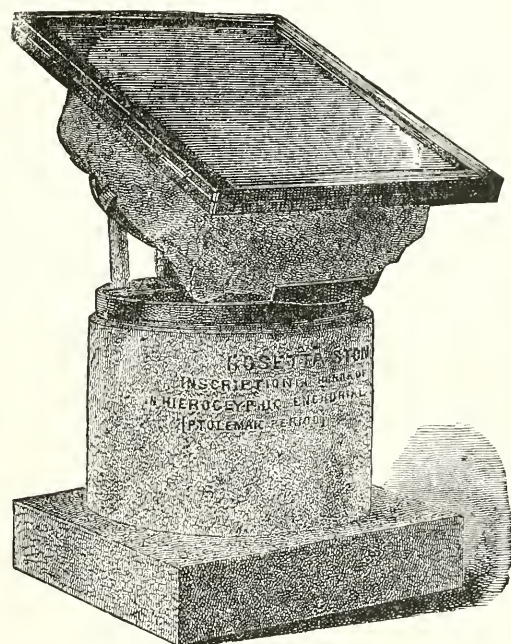
The oldest system, then, employed within the historic periods of Egypt was the so-called Hieroglyphics, or sacred carvings. It was long supposed that the pictorial symbols used in this famous writing were true ideographs or actual pictures of the things intended to be represented, and that the system was, there-

	Au		Mu		Am
	Âu		Na		Ar
	Au		Na		As
	Ba		Nu		Âk
	Ba		Pa		Hk
	Bu		Pu		Rn
	Fi		Ra		Ur
	Zi		Ru		Km
	Ha		Sa		Kr
	Ha		Su		Mh
	Ha		Su		Mr
	Hu		Su		Nfr
	Iu		Ta		Nu
	Io		Tu		Pr
	Iu		Ua		Sb
	I		Ui		Sb
	I		Ui		Ts
	K'a		Kh'a		Uh
	Ka		Khi		Ur
	Ka		Shâ		Shm
	K'a		Sha		Sh'n
	Ma		Shi		Sh't
	Ma		Shu		Kh'pr
	Ma		Khnô		

EGYPTIAN ALPHABET.

them dispelled by the patience and ingenuity of French, German, and English scholarship.

It is now known that in the course of Egyptian history down to the time of the Roman emperors four systems of writing were successively employed. Further back than the old-



THE ROSETTA STONE, BRITISH MUSEUM.

fore, analogous to that employed in the writing of the Mexicans and North American Indians; but the investigations of Champollion, De Rougé, Young, and Mariette have shown conclusively that the opinion is unfounded, and that the hieroglyphics are true phonetic writing, in which the words are spelled out just as in any of the Aryan languages. It is to Champollion in particular that this discovery is due.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 1799 what is known as the ROSETTA STONE was discovered by some of Napoleon's men while making an excavation at Rosetta, in Lower Egypt. The stone contained an inscription written in three different characters: First, *Hieroglyphic*;

The difference between hieroglyphic and alphabetic writing has thus been shown to be only this: that in the hieroglyphic system the sounds of the language are represented by *pictures*, many of them no doubt adopted from an older ideographic symbolism, whereas



CHAMPOLLION.

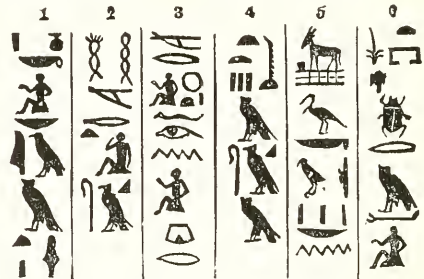
in the alphabetic system the sounds of the language are represented by arbitrary characters which have lost all resemblance to the objects of which they were no doubt originally pictures. It has thus transpired that that which was so long supposed to be the picture-writing of Egypt is really not picture-writing at all, but a system of pictorial phonetics in close analogy with other ancient writings.

second, *Demotic*, or common character of the Egyptians; third, *Greek*. From the Greek it was discovered that the inscription was tri-lingual; that is, each of the writings was a translation of the other. Beginning with this clue, Dr. Young finally succeeded, in 1815, in deciphering from the hieroglyphic character the single word *Ptolemy*; and, to the profound amazement of the scholars of the age, the spelling was found to be *Phonetic*, and not *ideographic*. The learned antiquarian also made out the name of *Berenice* among the pictorial writings in the frescoes of Karnak; and in 1822 Champollion deciphered the word *Cleopatra* from an obelisk found at Philæ. Afterwards, continuing his researches, he completed the translation of the Rosetta Stone, thereby opening up the whole field of Egyptian writings to the long-baffled scholars of the West.

Nevertheless the hieroglyphics constitute a system so exceedingly complex and obscure as to be extremely difficult to master, even by scholars of profound attainments in language.

Owing to the slowness and painstaking elaboration demanded in writing the Egyptian tongue in hieroglyphics, the priests at an early date introduced a modification of the symbols by which the pictorial figures were abbreviated and turned into a system of cursive signs running readily into each other in formation and constituting the second general variety of Egyptian writing called the *Hieratic*. The system was introduced as early as the Eleventh Dynasty. It was in this style that the great body of the Egyptian literature was composed; and it is by the resolution of the cursive hieratic forms back into the hieroglyphics of which they were the abbreviated characters, that we are enabled to translate the few rolls of papyrus which the ages have spared to modern times.

Meanwhile, a vulgar or non-literary language arose in Egypt. This tongue grew into importance and encroached upon the archaic and obsolescent forms of speech employed by the priests and literati. As early as the times of Psametik (B. C. 600) it was found necessary to concede something to the common speech. The people at large no longer understood the sacred language; and the Pharaohs found it expedient to translate proclama-



SPECIMEN OF EGYPTIAN WRITING.

tions, edicts, and finally the sacred papyri into the vulgar tongue. Thus arose the third system of composition known as the *Demotic*, which came into general use and maintained its place in Egypt until the second century of our era.

With the new ethnic development of the



Egyptian race, about the date last mentioned, we pass into the Coptic or last phase of the language. Coptic holds about the same relation to ancient Egyptian as English does to Anglo-Saxon. The Demotic character of the preceding era gave place to the Coptic alphabet, and the use of the old systems entirely ceased. An acquaintance with the Coptic language and literature, diligently cultivated in recent times, has been the basis of the profound erudition which has opened the treasures of ancient Egypt, and constitutes the special branch of learning known as EGYPTOLOGY.

In writing, the Egyptians used a sharpened reed and a palette containing two small wells, the one of red and the other of black ink. The black was used for the ordinary text, the red being reserved for initial letters, the first words of chapters, and other emphatic or critical parts. For paper the leaves of the papyrus were used, being joined together in strips trimmed to the width of ten inches, and frequently as much as a hundred and fifty feet in length, the text being written in vertical lines from one end to the other.

In mimetic art the Egyptians had little skill; but in the composition and management of colors they were more expert than any other people of antiquity, except the Greeks. The hues in which the artists of Thebes most delighted were red, green, and blue. In the laws of color-harmony the Theban painters appear to have been as well versed as those of modern times. It was an imperative rule with Egyptian artists to produce pleasing effects by contrast of color. Strong colors were rarely used without the employment of some complementary tint to soften the glare.

Painting as an art in Egypt was closely related to architecture. In common with the early Greeks and Etruscans, the Egyptian artists *painted their sculptures*. Color was an invariable concomitant of statuary and of the reliefs and intaglios with which the temples and tombs abounded. Columns, and especially capitals, were highly ornamented with the colors which were added, and the infinite figures and inscriptions covering façades and halls were in like manner carefully painted. So skillful was

the work that the alleged incongruity of color and form in sculpture little offended the taste of the beholder. Though this style of work is repugnant to that dictum of modern criticism which requires in sculpture the exposure of the native stone, the Egyptians chose to combine the effects of color with the charm of outline; and it can not well be doubted, when we take into consideration the severe aspect of all Egyptian structures, that a certain cheerfulness and life were given thereto by the addition of paint.

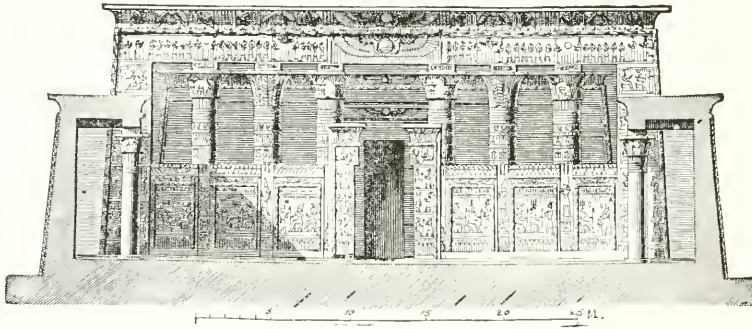
Perhaps no better idea of the combined effects of sculpture and painting can anywhere be obtained than in the great palace-temple of Ramses III., at Medinet-Habu. On the northeast wall of this famous ruin is depicted the king seated on his throne under a gorgeous canopy. The throne is inscribed with a hawk-headed figure leading a lion and sphinx. Behind the monarch stand the winged effigies of Truth and Justice. The shrine is borne by twelve princes of the realm. High officers of state wave their *labella* before the mighty Ramses. Priests carry his arms and insignia. The sons of the king follow, bearing the footstool of their father's throne, and accompanied by scribes and great warriors. In another part is seen a procession of scholars, fan-bearers, and soldiers. A great scribe makes a proclamation from a roll of papyrus, and the high-priest of Egypt burns incense before the shrine. Birds fly abroad to the four quarters of the world as if to announce to gods and men of the north, south, east, and west the glory and renown of Pharaoh. All this and more is elaborately sculptured, and the effect artistically heightened by the art of the painter. In the temples and palaces of Thebes a like profusion of color and form give evidence of the industry and skill of the Egyptian artists. Nor have the fingers of time much more effaced the brilliant hues which were laid on the surface of the sculptures than they have crumbled the stone itself.

Not only were the statues and reliefs, the columns and halls of palaces and temples elaborately painted, but the hieroglyphics and papyrus rolls, were also embellished with col-

ors of great durability—red, blue, yellow, or black—according to the taste of the age; nor were the Egyptians without ability to delineate living forms or landscapes wholly by means of color. The specimens of such ancient art which have survived to our own times are more remarkable, however, for the brightness and luster of their tints than for any excellence of general design or particular skill in drawing.

The civilization of Ancient as of Modern

Egypt was wanting in ideality. The genius of the people rose not into the realm of the imagination, but flew low on heavy and un-aspiring wing, skimming the dusky horizon of the practical. Solidity and grandeur, a certain stillness of aspect and durability in purpose rather than the winged ideality of a lighter and diviner art, are the qualities which are reflected from the massive monuments slumbering in eternal repose amid the sands and bulrushes of the valley of the Nile.



CROSS SECTION OF THE TEMPLE OF EDFU.

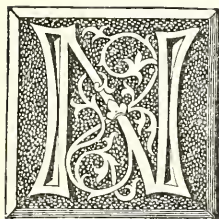




## Book Second.

# CHALDÆA.

## CHAPTER VI.—THE COUNTRY.



NOT unlike Egypt was the LAND OF THE CHALDÆANS. The great wastes of Arabia are raised but little above the level of the sea. Journeying eastward from this desert region the trav-

eler, before he begins the ascent of the mountain ranges of Kurdistan, comes upon the long belt of fertile territory included between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Within this verdant strip of alluvium and valley-land, generally known by its Greek name of MESOPOTAMIA, flourished three of the most renowned kingdoms of antiquity—Chaldea, Assyria, and Babylonia.

Beginning at the foot of the mountains of Western Armenia, about the intersection of the thirty-eighth meridian east from Greenwich with the thirty-eighth parallel of north latitude, this famous Mesopotamian region winds away to the south-east, and narrows to a point on the Persian Gulf about longitude  $48^{\circ} 25' E$ .

For nearly five hundred miles in its lower course the country between the rivers has all the characteristics of a valley; but above the thirty-fourth parallel it widens, rises into a

hill-country, and in its upper part becomes a plateau, bordered on the north and east with mountains. The whole distance from the extreme north-west of the peculiar district embraced by the two great rivers to the head of the Persian Gulf is about eight hundred and fifty miles.

The peculiarities and importance of this remarkable region are traceable to the two magnificent streams which constitute its boundaries. Bordered on the west by waste plains and deserts, and on the east by a country of hills and mountains, the low-lying plain between was rimmed with deep channels of fresh water, never failing, exhaustless.

The EUPHRATES and the TIGRIS rise not far apart in the mountains of Armenia. The former has its source on the north of the range, and the latter in the southern slopes. The course of the Euphrates is first to the west; then it breaks through the mountains and sweeps in a broad circuit to the right, and then turns in a direction almost due south-east to its far-off confluence with the Persian Gulf.

The course of the Tigris is much more southerly and direct. Descending from the moun-

tains the stream steadily approximates the Euphrates until, in latitude  $33^{\circ}$  N., a junction of the two rivers seems imminent. Here, however, the Tigris bends to the east and the Euphrates slightly to the west, thus widening the district between them into the shape of an ancient urn. About two degrees further south the confluence actually occurs, though in ancient times each river pursued its course through separate channels to the Gulf.

In their upper course the Euphrates and the Tigris traverse a region of steppes broken by rocky ridges and interspersed with pastures and fruitful districts. The banks of the

dwindling, as does the Nile, from the diffusion and loss of waters.

The bed of the Euphrates is lower than that of the Tigris, and its course more quiet and regular. The Tigris, on his higher level, pressed in a narrow, rocky channel, hurries with swifter flow and greater turbulence. Frequent tributaries descending from the ridges and tablelands of Iran join the eastern river, maintaining and swelling his floods, while the solitary Euphrates is left to waste his wealth of waters in the sands.

The whole region lies sloping to the west—drooping as if to rest its western caves on the



CONFLUENCE OF THE TIGRIS AND EUPHRATES.

rivers are fringed with plane-trees, tamarisks, and cypresses. Here and there are meadowlands, alternating with low hills. Further on, as the rivers descend to the level, the valleys broaden; but at the same time the higher district between becomes more sterile—a kind of upland waste, abounding in ostriches and bustards, the native home of wild asses and nomadic tribes of men.

After this desolate hill-country is passed, and the two rivers have sufficiently approximated to share each other's influence, they enter a plain of brown alluvium, rich, inexhaustible. Through this region for a distance of more than four hundred miles the streams pursue their course, the Euphrates

desert of Arabia. For this reason the Euphrates, not confined by rocky barriers, has ever shown a disposition to encroach upon his right-hand bank, fixing his channel still further and further to the west. This tendency has been of vast importance to the region along the western bank in the matter of irrigation: as far as the waters of the river could be carried by artificial channels, assisted by the natural pressure of the current westward, the desert could be reclaimed and converted into a garden.

Like the Nile, the Euphrates and the Tigris are subject to annual floods. With the approach of summer the snows, lying heaped in the gorges of the Armenian mountains, are



dissolved and poured out into the upper tributaries of the rivers. Rains also descend, and the combined effects are seen in overflowed banks and submerged valleys.

The inundation in the Tigris begins as early as the first of June, while that in the Euphrates, whose fountains lie for the most part on the north side of the mountain ranges, does not begin until the early part of July. Unlike the Nile, however, the rising of whose waters is so regular and calm as to be hardly perceptible from day to day, the floods of the two great rivers of Mesopotamia, especially those of the Tigris, are frequently violent and destructive. Sometimes in the course of a few hours the valleys are deluged, and the sandy plains bordering the rivers in their lower course converted into a wide and turbulent sea rolling down to the gulf.

In the matter of tributaries both rivers are, in their upper course, plentifully supplied—the Tigris abundantly. On the east the Euphrates receives the Belik and the Khabur, the latter widely branching into the hill-country of Mygdonia. The principal tributaries of the Tigris are the Great and Lesser Zab, the Adhem, and the Gyndes. A hundred smaller streams contribute their waters; but in its lower course even the Tigris is scantily supplied with affluent streams.

For eight hundred miles above its entrance into the Persian Gulf the Euphrates receives not a single tributary. As a consequence, no other river in the world is, in the different parts of its course, so greatly variable in its quantity of waters. At the junction of the Khabur the breadth of the Euphrates is three hundred and fifty yards, and this general width, with a depth of from fifteen to twenty feet, is maintained as far south as the city of Hit, in latitude  $33^{\circ} 34' N$ . From this point the river dwindles. In the first hundred miles below Hit the width is reduced to two hundred and fifty yards. After this the volume is absorbed by canals and natural channels, branching right and left, until at the site of Babylon the width is no more than two hundred yards, with a depth of fifteen feet. At the thirty-second parallel the stream is reduced to a width of one hundred and twenty yards,

with a depth of only twelve feet, indicating a loss of nearly four-fifths of the waters which filled the channel in the upper course of the river. In its lower course next the sea the Euphrates recovers a part of its wasted waters by the return of the canals, and enters the gulf with a width of two hundred yards and a depth of eighteen feet. The Tigris grows in volume through its whole extent, and at its confluence with the Euphrates is the greater river of the two. The entire length of the Euphrates is 1,780 miles and of the Tigris 1,146 miles, including, in each case the windings of the channels.

In the present Book we are concerned only with that part of Mesopotamia included by the great rivers of Assyria after they descend to the alluvial plain through which they flow in their lower course. The line of division between Upper and Lower Assyria may be definitely indicated as beginning at Hit,<sup>1</sup> on the Euphrates, and extending in a north-easterly direction across the Mesopotamian region to Samarah on the Tigris. Below this line the country, in shape like an ancient goblet, is an alluvium, deposited by the rivers, not unlike Egypt in its physical features, and next to Egypt the oldest country with which history is concerned—CHALDÆA.

That which most attracts attention and excites wonder in the region here described is the absence of those physical features with which the landscapes of nearly all countries are diversified. Here nothing is to be seen except the two great rivers, their banks fringed with palms and cypresses. On all sides the sandy plains stretch away to the horizon, the dead expanse broken now and then by a mound or ruin, or marked by a long, low line of earth, the bank of some ancient canal. Close to the border of the river where the marsh-lands abound, and along the artificial channels through which the waters are distributed, the vegetation is green, luxuriant; but these verdant strips soon disappear, and the eye, except in early spring, rests on nothing but an arid plain, swelling towards the south into an occasional ridge or sand-dune. To the west, at a distance of from

<sup>1</sup>The same as *Ihi* or *Is*.

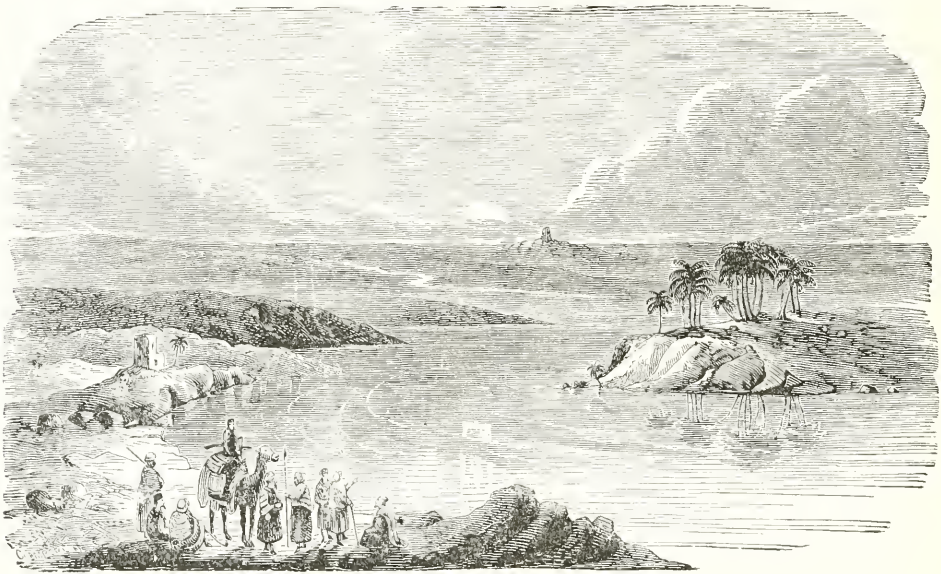
twenty to thirty miles from the Euphrates, vegetation wholly disappears, and the Arabian desert, desolate and unbroken, spreads away to the sky.

The present extent of Chaldæa Proper, that is, of the urn-shaped district between the two rivers, is about fifteen thousand square miles. The long strip of fertile territory lying between the Euphrates and the Arabian desert has an area of eight thousand square miles; so that the aggregate area of Chaldæa, if determined by the present geographical condition of the country, would be about twenty-three thousand square miles—a dis-

trict more than a hundred—perhaps two hundred—miles further than at the present day.

The simple physical structure of Chaldæa, the mild climate,<sup>1</sup> the presence of a perennial supply of fresh water without the annoyance and interruptions of frequent and violent rains, and especially the fertility of the soil, only equaled in its fecundity by the never-failing fruitfulness of Egypt—all contributed to supply to the primitive tribes of this region incentives to civilization second only to those afforded in the valley of the Nile.

The low-lying flats stretching from river to river had in them the best elements of natural



THE EUPHRATES AND PLAIN OF CHALDÆA.

trict equal in extent to the State of West Virginia.

But the ancient limits of “the land of the Chaldæans” were less in extent than here defined. From the remotest epoch the Persian Gulf has been steadily receding to the south. The enormous amount of earthy matter carried down by the Euphrates and the Tigris and deposited further and further seaward has crowded back the waters of the gulf and built up a district thousands of square miles in extent. The rate of the recession of the sea has been estimated at a mile in each seventy years, and by some authorities at a mile in thirty years. Nor is it doubtful that within the historic period the Persian Gulf extended inland

wealth. Even beyond the Tigris the lands were fruitful. Between the rivers the fertility was marvelous. Wheat and barley, castor-beans and sesame, grew wild. In the low marshes bordering the streams the succulent and bulbous plants flourished in native abundance. Here thousands of aquatic birds circled around the ponds and hatched their young among the rushes. Both of the rivers abounded in fish—always a chief factor in

<sup>1</sup>The climate of Chaldæa is rather milder than that of Georgia and the Carolinas. On the lower Euphrates snow is unknown, and though the heat of summer is excessive, the vicissitudes from hot to cold are so quiet and equable as to affect but slightly the constitution of the inhabitants.



a people's food. On the higher lands apples and dates were plentifully produced and flourished without culture or attention. The truthful Xenophon was struck with astonishment at the beauty and fruitfulness of the date-palms growing along the river.<sup>1</sup>

That such a district should in the earliest times attract a great population, and that this population should be stimulated to vast civilizing enterprises, was natural, inevitable. The Primitive Man was quick to discover that situation which afforded him the greatest rewards with the smallest expenditure of toil. There he fixed his habitation. There also his fellows, driven by hunger from the hill-country or desert waste, came and established their abodes. The hut became a hamlet; the village, a great city. Whatever opposition nature presented added to the zest of endeavor. The necessity of standing guard against the danger of the sudden overflow of the river, the work of draining the marsh-lands, and of digging vast canals for the purposes of irrigation, were additional motives, rather than discouragements, to the zeal of an ambitious people.

To her other advantages ancient Chaldæa added the proximity of the sea. The Persian Gulf, a spacious body of water, lay always at her feet. It was an invitation to commerce and the consequent establishment of friendly and beneficial relations with distant states. The branch of the sea which washed the

Chaldean sands was protected by its position from the violent storms which make the Indian Ocean a terror to the mariner. This circumstance was a further incentive to maritime enterprises, and will account in some measure for the early ascendancy of the Lower Empire over the neighboring kingdoms. How well the people of this region improved the advantages of their situation will appear as we survey the records of the



DATE PALM OF THE LOWER EUPHRATES.

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus says of Chaldæa: "Of all countries that we know there is none that is so fruitful in grain. It makes no pretension, indeed, of growing the fig, the olive, the vine, or any other tree of the kind; but in grain it is so fruitful as to yield commonly two hundred fold, and when the production is at the greatest even three hundred fold. The blade of the wheat-plant and of the barley-plant is often four fingers in breadth. As for the millet and the sesame, I shall not say to what height they grow, though within my knowledge; for I am not ignorant that what I have already written concerning the fruitfulness of Babylonia will appear incredible to those who have not visited the country." To this Theophrastus adds: "In Babylon the wheat fields are regularly mown twice, and then fed off with beasts to keep down the luxuriance of the leaf; otherwise the plant does not run to ear."

great state which they planted and so long upheld by their valor. Having control of the wide water-courses by which the products of one of the richest districts in Asia must be carried abroad, and holding to the broad, deep arm of the sea which constituted her harbor on the south, Chaldæa easily asserted and maintained her preëminence among the earliest and greatest monarchies of the ancient world.

## CHAPTER VII.—PEOPLE AND LANGUAGE.



THE kinship of the people of ancient Chaldea with the other nations of antiquity has been much debated. For a long time it was confidently maintained that the Chaldeans belonged to the Semitic family of mankind, being in close affinity with the Hebrews, who traced their descent from Shem. It was urged in proof of this position that the language of the people who planted the first kingdoms on the Lower Euphrates was so closely allied with the Hebrew and Aramaic dialects as to point unmistakably to a common origin for these several tribes.

This view is still maintained by some of the ablest linguists and historians; but within our own times an opposing theory has been advanced which seems likely to supplant the other. A review of the whole question has tended to show that the ancient Chaldeans belonged to the Hamitic family of mankind, having their closest affinities of race with the primitive tribes of Arabia, the Abyssinians, the Egyptians, and the peoples of Northern Africa. Recent investigations have greatly strengthened this view by showing that the language spoken by the ancient inhabitants of Chaldea, instead of being, as had been supposed, a Semitic tongue, was really a distinct speech, though modified by Semitic influences. The question here presented to the student of history is of a kind to excite his interest, and to demand at the hands of the historian some further exposition of the present state of human knowledge concerning the different races of men.

The best classification adopted by ethnologists, at the present day, is that which divides mankind into three races: Black races, Brown races, and White or Ruddy races.<sup>1</sup> These dis-

criminations on the line of color were as strongly drawn at the daydawn of authentic history as they are to-day, and are, therefore, rightly employed as the best criteria by which to distinguish one race of men from another.

In point of civilization the Ruddy races have far outstripped the Brown, and the Brown have outstripped the Black. So strikingly has this difference in progress been manifested that the historian is not called upon to relate the annals of any of the Black races of men; and his references to the achievements of the Brown races are few and rather incidental. The whole field of ancient and modern history is virtually occupied with the ambitions, activities, and grand monuments of those Ruddy peoples who, springing from a common origin in the East and scattering everywhere, have obtained and held the mastery of the world.

In the period covered by ancient history the Ruddy race extended in its distribution from the valley of the Indus to the western shores of Europe, and from the equator where it crosses Africa to the Baltic Sea. Within this wide extended and diversified area of country the primitive tribes of men were nearly all of a common ancestral family. In a large part of the territory now occupied by the Russian empire the original tribes were brown, but beyond this, within the region above defined, neither Brown races nor Black contributed to form the original population.

The Ruddy family of mankind has been divided by ethnologists into three principal races. These are—

#### 1. THE ARYAN RACE. This branch of

White race, properly so-called. The color of the fairest people of the fairest race of ancient or modern times has been a hue very different from white. The term flesh-color or red much more nearly describes the complexion of our own race than the long-accepted epithet, white—which term, indeed, has never been properly applied to any race, except to emphasize the contrast between the Ruddy and the Black or Brown.

<sup>1</sup> It is a matter of surprise that the color of the Ruddy races of men should have been so universally mistaken for white. There has never been a



the human family is frequently designated by the biblical epithet *Japhetic*, so named after Japhet, the eldest son of Noah. To this race the names *Indo-Germanic* and *Indo-European* have also been applied by scholars; but the name *Aryan* (from the root AR, signifying to *plow*) has now been generally accepted as the term by which the people of Europe are to be designated. The dispersion of this race at the present time is world-wide, but within the period embraced by ancient history the Aryans were limited to Europe and the approximate parts of Asia.

2. THE SEMITIC RACE. The name of this division is derived from Shem, the second son of Noah, and the term *Semitic* has been adopted by scholars as properly descriptive of that ancient people who, branching from beyond Assyria, carried their tribes into Northern Arabia, across the Red Sea and Upper Egypt into the African desert, northward into Armenia, westward into Canaan, and far out through the Mediterranean, touching the coasts of Africa, and reaching, perhaps, even to Spain and Britain.

3. THE HAMITIC RACE. The name of this family of mankind has likewise been derived from the name of one of the sons of Noah—Ham. As in the case of the Semitic division the term *Hamitic* has been adopted from biblical language, and is used by ethnologists and historians to designate that branch of the human race which taking its rise somewhere between the Caspian and the Persian Gulf, held its course westward through Chaldæa; branched to the south around the sea-line of Arabia into Eastern Africa; entered by a direct migration to the west the valley of the Nile, and further on peopled the whole coast of Northern Africa; branched again by a deflection to the north, and passing through Asia Minor may have entered Southern Greece and Italy, planting, perhaps, in these two countries the primitive tribes afterwards known as Pelasgians and Etruscans. But whether the latter peoples were certainly of Hamitic origin is still a matter of dispute.

It has not been well established whether the ethnic affinity between the Chaldæans and the Egyptians, already referred to in the pre-

ceding Book, resulted from a migration of tribes from the lower Euphrates to the valley of the Nile, or whether the migratory movement was in the opposite direction from Egypt into Chaldæa. Certain it is that so far as history is concerned the Egyptians, having developed the older civilization, may fairly be regarded as the older people; and the presumption would be that the migratory movement by which race relationship was established between the Egyptians and the Chaldæans was from the west to the east.<sup>1</sup>

It will thus be seen that if the foregoing analysis and scheme of the dispersion of the Ruddy or White races be correctly given, the primitive people of Upper Mesopotamia belonged to the Semitic family, and the inhabitants of Lower Mesopotamia, or Chaldæa Proper, to the Hamitic family of mankind; and the student of history will from the preceding discussion have little difficulty in apprehending the nature of the relationship.

More than the other peoples of antiquity the ancient Chaldæans were modified by contact with neighboring races. Some tribes of brown Turanians, coming from the north-east, appear to have invaded the country at a very remote epoch, and by settlement therein to have amalgamated with the Chaldæans. Likewise the Semites of Assyria, by constant intercourse, influenced the language and manners of the people who ruled on the Lower Euphrates. Nor is it improbable that Aryan tribes, by early contact with the inhabitants of Chaldæa, may have contributed some elements to the speech and character of the nation.

What we know of the personal characteristics of the ancient Chaldæans has been gathered from an examination of the physiognomy and form of those peoples known to be of the Hamitic race, rather than from the existing

<sup>1</sup> Rawlinson in summing up the evidence on this point says: "On the whole, therefore, it seems most probable that the race designated in Scripture by the hero-founder Nimrod, and among the Greeks by the eponym of Belus, passed from East Africa, by way of Arabia, to the valley of the Euphrates shortly before the opening of the historical period." Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. I., page 54.

monuments of Chaldæa. The Ethiopians are noted for their swart, reddish complexion and their crisp or frizzled hair.<sup>1</sup> Herodotus describes the people of Babylon as being of a dark complexion and having straight black hair.<sup>2</sup> The Abyssinians, the Copts, the Arabs, and the people of Beloochistan of modern times furnish the best idea of the features and complexion of the ancient inhabitants of Chaldæa, whose color seems to have been a dark red-brown or copper-hue, and whose person appears to have been well proportioned and somewhat delicate in outline. The figure of the modern Abyssinians is slender; their features regular and handsome. The forehead is well formed, indicating a fair degree of intelligence; the eyes are dark and lustrous; the nose, straight and high; and the chin, firm and prominent. Nor are the lips heavy and repulsive, as in the case of the Negro races of the interior of Africa. And this, perhaps, is a fair type of the Chaldean, who four thousand years ago gathered dates and built cities on the banks of the Euphrates.

The Chaldæans were a people brave, warlike, and energetic. The proximity, at a very early period, of powerful kingdoms on the east and north was calculated to stimulate the military spirit in repelling invasion and making conquest. Agriculture was the one fundamental industry suggested by the character of the country. While this pursuit was of a kind to incite the energies of the people, it was also calculated to provoke aggression and thereby to kindle the spirit of war.

In ingenuity and skill the Chaldæans displayed both natural aptitude and acquired proficiency; and in those social qualities and dispositions by which the humanity of a race is so well estimated, they suffer not by comparison with the better and more enlightened nations of the ancient world.

It does not appear that the name *Chaldean*

<sup>1</sup>The frizzled hair of the Ethiopians does not at all resemble the woolly hair of the Negroes, and the other physical characteristics of the two races are equally dissimilar.

<sup>2</sup>Hair of this kind has been found in a Chaldean tomb of a very early period, the quantity being so abundant as to indicate that the head of the occupant had been profusely adorned by nature.

was ever employed by the races dwelling about the Persian Gulf to designate themselves. Nor is it likely that in the earliest times this appellative was used by the people of other kingdoms as the name of the inhabitants of Babylon and the adjacent regions. In the ninth century before our era the term Chaldean first appears in the Assyrian inscriptions. Later the word was generally employed as the name of the people of Lower Mesopotamia. The historian Berosus, who was certainly competent to say what should be the race-appellation of his own people, called them Chaldæans. The home of Abraham is mentioned in Genesis as Ur of the *Chaldees*, though this does not imply that the term "Chaldees" was used as early as the times of Abraham. The words Chaldee, Chaldæa, etc., are the same as the Burbur word *Khaldi*, meaning the *Moon-god*, and that also is the meaning of the word *Ur* or *Hur*. This is to say that Abraham was called from the city of the Moon-worshippers, or the city of the Chaldæans. In the later Scriptures the word is of frequent occurrence. Habakkuk says, "Lo, I raise up the Chaldæans, that bitter and hasty nation." Isaiah in one place calls Babylon "the daughter of the Chaldæans," and in another "the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency;" while in Job we are told that "the Chaldæans made out three bands and fell upon the camels." Among the Roman authors the word is of frequent occurrence, being found in the writings of Suetonius, the *Annals* of Tacitus, and the *Satires* of Juvenal. This common use of the term by ancient authors may well be regarded as sufficient authority for the retention of the name in modern writings.<sup>1</sup>

Modern investigations have shown that the primitive inhabitants of Chaldæa consisted of four principal tribes. On the monuments sovereignty over four races is ascribed to the early monarchs, and the inscriptions speak of four tongues or dialects among the people. It is not probable that these tribal differences of

<sup>1</sup>This peculiarity in the naming of the race whose chief capital was Babylon has its parallel in the case of the Greeks, who, though called *Greeks* by all the world besides, never even *heard* of such an appellation.



speech were so marked as to indicate diversity of races, but rather a diversity among the branches of a common stock. The inscriptions show that the Chaldee was indeed a composite language, but its vocabulary is always essentially Cushite or Hamitic, just as the English vocabulary, though composite, is fundamentally Anglo-Saxon. In the Chaldee grammar there are strong traces of Turanian influence, just as in English the impress of the Latin models which were dominant in the minds of the British monks of the Middle Ages has been stamped upon our grammar.

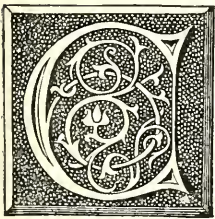
The nearest approach found among living languages to the ancient Chaldee is in the dialects of Abyssinia, and, among ancient tongues, in the language of Egypt.<sup>1</sup> It is not to be disputed, however, that Chaldee contained so many foreign elements as to make the work of classification difficult, and to give plausible grounds for disputing its Cushite character.

Some portions of the grammar of Chaldæa have been satisfactorily explained, but other parts are still either obscure or altogether unknown. The conjugation of the verb is represented as exceedingly complicated. In so far as the process has been explained it is said to be somewhat analogous to the verb-forms in Hebrew. In the formation of the objec-

tive case of nouns the suffix *ku* is added, as in Hindustance. The plurals of nouns and pronouns are formed by doubling the root-word. Thus the pronoun *nî*, meaning "him," is made plural by reduplication, *nîni* (equivalent to *him-him*) meaning "them." In the formation of the ablative case of pronouns the preposition *kita*, meaning "with," which generally governs that case, is *divided*, and the governed word put between the parts. Thus *kita* is "with," and *mu*, "me;" but the expression "with me," instead of being written *kita mu*, is *ki-mu-ta*. *Ki-mi-ta* means "with us;" *ki-zu-ta*, "with thee;" *ki-nîni-ta*, "with them," etc. This is as if we should say in English, "wi-me-th," for "with me;" "wi-us-th," for "with us;" "wi-thee-th," for "with thee;" "wi-them-th," for "with them," etc. Several other peculiarities of Chaldee have been explained by Smith and Rawlinson, but the system as a whole is but poorly understood, even by the best oriental scholars.

As to the nature of the writing employed by the ancient inhabitants of Lower Mesopotamia and the character of the inscriptions which they have left to modern times, these topics will be discussed in a succeeding chapter on the Science and Art of the Chaldæans.

## CHAPTER VIII.—CHRONOLOGY AND ANNALS.



ONCERNING the antiquity of the Chaldæan Empire we have the testimony of one native historian, Berosus. This famous annalist flourished during the first half of the third century before the Christian era. He was a priest of Bel at Babylon, and had access to the records of his country.

<sup>1</sup> A few equivalents will serve to show the affinities of Old Chaldee—thus:

English, "after;"	in Chaldee, <i>egir</i> ;	in Abyssinian, <i>igria</i> .
" "great;"	" <i>gula</i> ;	" <i>guda</i> .
" "little;"	" <i>tura</i> ;	" <i>tuna</i> .
" "father;"	" <i>atta</i> ;	" <i>etca</i> .

Soon after the conquest of Babylon by Alexander the Great, Berosus wrote a *History of Chaldea* in Greek, in three books, and dedicated the work to Antiochus, king of Syria. If this history by Berosus had been preserved to the present time it would, no doubt, throw much light upon many of the vexed questions of antiquity. Unfortunately, the work has perished—except a few fragments which were transcribed by Apollodorus and Polyhistor,

English, "brother;"	in Chaldee, <i>sîs</i> ;	in Abyssinian, <i>isha</i> .
" "road;"	" <i>kharran</i> ;	" <i>kara</i> .
" "horse;"	" <i>kurra</i> ;	in Arabic, <i>gurra</i> .
" "mountain;"	" <i>gabri</i> ;	" <i>jabal</i> .
" "river;"	" <i>ar</i> ;	" <i>nahr</i> .
" "house;"	" <i>ê</i> ;	in Egyptian, <i>ê</i> .

two Greek authors of the first century B. C., and from them were afterwards quoted by Eusebius and Syncellus. It is only from these fragments that we gather a Babylonian's own views of the previous history of his country.

The work of Berosus begins with an account of the traditions of the Chaldeans concerning the creation of the world and the origin of man. The chapter which narrates the genesis of things runs thus: "Once all was darkness and water. In this chaos lived horrid animals, and men with two wings, and others with four wings and two faces, and others again that were both male and female. Some had the thighs of goats, and horns on their heads; others had horses' feet, or were formed behind like a horse and in front like a man. There were bulls with human heads; and horses and men with the heads of dogs; and other animals of human shape with fins like fishes; and fishes like sirens; and dragons, and creeping things, and serpents, and wild creatures, the images of which are to be found in the temple of Bel. Over all these ruled a woman of the name of Omorka. But Bel divided the darkness and clove the woman asunder, and of one part he made the earth, and of the other the sun, and moon, and planets; and he drew off the water, and apportioned it to the land, and prepared and arranged the world. But those creatures could not endure the light of the sun, and became extinct.

"When Bel saw the land uninhabited, and yet fruitful, he smote off his head and bade one of the gods mingle the blood which flowed from his head with earth, and form therewith men and animals and wild creatures, who could support the atmosphere. A great multitude of men of various tribes inhabited Chaldæa, but they lived without any order, like the animals. Then there appeared to them from the sea, on the shore of Babylonia, a fearful animal of the name of OAN. His body was that of a fish, but under the fish's head another head was attached, and on the fins were feet like those of a man, and it had a man's voice. Its image is still preserved. The animal came at morning, and passed the day with men. But it took no

nourishment, and at sunset went again into the sea, and there remained for the night. This animal taught men language and science, the harvesting of seeds and fruits, the rules for the boundaries of land, the mode of building cities and temples, arts and writing, and all that pertains to the civilization of men."

Such is the mythical account of the origin of things as related in the first chapter of the history of Berosus. The next part of the work is devoted to the chronology of the Chaldean kingdom from the creation down to the sixth century before our era. The epoch before the flood—for Berosus has an account of a deluge—is assigned to ten kings, to whom fabulous reigns are allotted as follows:

1. Alorus, a Chaldean, who reigned.....36,000 years.
2. Alopapus, son of Alorus, who reigned.....10,800 "
3. Ahmelon, a native of Sippara, who reigned...46,800 "
4. Ammenon, a Chaldean, who reigned.....43,200 "
5. Amegalarus, of Sippara, who reigned.....64,800 "
6. Daönuus, of Sippara, who reigned.....36,000 "
7. Edorankhus, of Sippara, who reigned.....64,800 "
8. Amempsinus, a Chaldean, who reigned.....36,000 "
9. Otiartes, a Chaldean, who reigned.....28,000 "
10. Xisuthrus, the Chaldean Noah, who reigned...64,800 "

A total of ten kings, reigning.....432,000 years

After the flood the kings of Chaldæa are divided in the scheme of Berosus among nine dynasties. At the close of the first of these dynasties we pass from the fabulous to the historical era, though in some subsequent parts it must be allowed that conjecture rather than knowledge has filled the tables of numbers and dates. The scheme of Berosus, therefore, as completed by modern scholars for the epoch after Xisuthrus, is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

DYNASTY.	NUMBER OF KINGS.	REIGNING.	DATE.
I. Chaldean.....	?	?	? to B.C. 2458*
II. Median.....	8	406 years *	2458 * to 2052
III. ? .....	11	48 "	2052 to 2004
IV. Chaldean.....	49	458 "	2004 to 1546
V. Arabian.....	9 <sup>2</sup>	245 "	1546 to 1301
VI. ? .....	45	526 "	1301 to 775
VII. Chaldean (Pul).....	1	28 "	775 to 747
VIII. ? .....	13	122 "	747 to 625
IX. Babylonian.....	6	87 "	625 to 538

<sup>1</sup>The three numbers marked with an asterisk are a variation from the computations of Rawlinson, who makes the First Dynasty close and the Second begin with the year B. C. 2286 instead of 2458 as given above. The author has been induced to adopt the variation by a discussion in Duncker's *History of Antiquity*, Vol. I., page 247.

<sup>2</sup>The monumental inscriptions have recently shown that there were as many as fifteen kings belonging to this dynasty.



This scheme may be regarded as fairly authentic except in particulars—mostly unimportant—which are marked as questionable. If we allow but a century to be occupied with the First Dynasty we are carried back to the year 2550 B. C. as the approximate date for the beginning of Chaldean history.

To Berosus we are indebted for what is known as the Chaldean or Babylonian account of the flood. The narrative is full of interest as tending to show that all the nations having their geographical center in Mesopotamia preserved a common tradition of a great flood of waters, by which the country was deluged and the people destroyed. The narrative as given by Berosus is as follows:

"In this year the god Bel revealed to Xisuthrus in a dream that in the fifteenth year and the month Daësius there would be a great storm of rain, and men would be destroyed by the flood of waters. He bade him bury all written records, ancient, mediæval, and modern in Sippara, the city of the sun, and build a ship and embark in it with his kindred and nearest friends. He was also to take food and drink into the ship, and carry into it all creatures winged and four-footed.

"Xisuthrus did as he was bidden and built a boat fifteen stadia long<sup>1</sup> and two stadia in breadth, and placed in it his wife and child, his relatives and friends. Then the inundation came. When the rain ceased Xisuthrus sent out some birds, but they returned to the ship, as they could find nothing to eat and no place of rest. After a few days he sent out other birds. They also returned, but with mud on their feet. Then Xisuthrus sent yet others, and they never returned. Xisuthrus knew that the earth had appeared. He took out a part of the roof of his boat, and perceived that it had settled down on a mountain. Then he went out with his wife and daughter and the architect of the boat. He worshiped the earth, and built an altar and offered sacrifice to the gods, and then disap-

peared, together with those whom he had brought out of the boat. When his companions whom he had left in the boat had gone out and were in search of Xisuthrus, his voice called to them out of the air, saying that the gods had carried him away in reward for his piety; that he with his daughter and the architect were dwelling among the gods. But the others were to return from Armenia, where they then were, to Babylon, and, in obedience to the command of the gods, dig up the books buried at Sippara and give them to mankind. They obeyed those instructions. They sacrificed to the gods, and returned by land to Babylon. They dugged up the sacred books, erected many cities and temples, and rebuilt Babylon. On the Gordyæan mountains, where it settled, remains of the boat of Xisuthrus were in existence for a long time afterwards."

This account of the great flood, as given by Berosus, is heightened in interest by comparison with the later and more ornate tradition of the same event as found recorded in the inscriptions of Assyria. Among the ruins of the palace of Ashur-bani-pal, an Assyrian monarch of the seventh century B. C., tablets have been found from which the story of the flood has been deciphered in terms somewhat different, and yet strikingly analogous to the old Chaldean tradition. The legend recorded on the tablets runs thus: That the god Hea commanded Sisit<sup>1</sup> to build a ship of given dimensions and to launch it on the deep, for it was his purpose to destroy sinners. Then Hea said:

"When the flood comes which I will send thou shalt enter into the ship, and into the midst of it thou shalt bring thy corn, thy goods, thy gods, thy gold and silver, thy slaves male and female, the sons of the army, the wild and tame animals; and all that thou hearest thou shalt do. And Sisit gathered together all his possessions of silver and gold, all that he had of the seeds of life, and caused all of his slaves, male and female, to

<sup>1</sup>That is, nine thousand feet. This is the length given in the fragment of Berosus quoted by Eusebius. The same extract, as quoted by Syncellus, makes the length five stadia, or three thousand feet.

<sup>1</sup>The same as Xisuthrus. In the writings of Lucian the name of the captain of the deluge is given as Sisytthes, which is evidently a form intermediate between Xisuthrus and Sisit.

go into the ship. The wild and tame beasts of the field also he caused to enter, and all the sons of the army.

“And Samas, the Sun-god, made a flood, and said: ‘I will cause rain to fall heavily from heaven; go into the ship and shut the door.’ Overcome with fear Sisit entered into the ship, and on the morning of the day fixed by Samas the storm began to blow from the ends of heaven, and Bin thundered in the midst of heaven, and Nebo came forth, and over the mountains and plains came the gods, and Nergal the Destroyer overthrew, and Adar came forth and dashed down: the gods made ruin; in their brightness they swept over the earth.

“The storm went over the nations; the flood of Bin reached up to heaven; brother did not see brother; the lightsome earth became a desert, and the flood destroyed all living things from the face of the earth. Even the gods were afraid of the storm, and sought refuge in the heaven of Anu; like hounds drawing in their tails, the gods seated themselves on their thrones, and Istar, the great goddess, spake: ‘The world has turned to sin, and therefore I have proclaimed destruction. I have begotten men, and now they fill the sea like the children of fishes.’ And the gods upon their seats wept with her. On the seventh day the storm abated, which had destroyed like an earthquake, and the sea began to dry. Sisit perceived the movement of the sea. Like reeds floated the corpses of the evil-doers and all who had turned to sin. Then Sisit opened the window, and the light fell upon his face, and the ship was stayed upon Mount Nizir, and could not pass over it. Then on the seventh day Sisit sent forth a dove, but she found no place of rest, and returned. Then he sent a swallow, which also returned; and again a raven, which saw the corpses in the water and ate them, and returned no more.

“Then Sisit released the beasts to the four winds of heaven, and poured a libation, and built an altar upon the top of the mountain, and cut seven herbs, and the sweet savor of the sacrifice caused the gods to assemble, and Sisit prayed that Bel might not come to the

altar. For Bel had made the storm and sunk the people in the deep, and wished in his anger to destroy the ship, and allow no man to escape. Adar opened his mouth, and spoke to the warrior Bel: ‘Who would then be left?’ And Hea spoke to him: ‘Captain of the gods, instead of the storm let lions and leopards increase, and diminish mankind; let famine and pestilence desolate the land and destroy mankind.’ When the sentence of the gods was passed, Bel came into the midst of the ship and took Sisit by the hand and conducted him forth, and caused his wife to be brought to his side, and purified the earth, and made a covenant; and Sisit and his wife and his people were carried away like gods, and Sisit dwelt in a distant land at the mouth of the rivers.”<sup>1</sup>

Traditions of a flood have been preserved in all countries the formation of which has been such as to subject them to the danger of overflow. Egypt is, perhaps, the only exception, and this is easily accounted for by the fact that the inundations of the Nile were so regular and so beneficial in their results as to be desired rather than dreaded by the people. Legends similar to those of the Chaldeans and Assyrians have been found among the peoples of Armenia, Thessaly, Bœotia, India, and indeed, in all countries exposed to destructive floods. The story of the deluge as narrated in the seventh chapter of Genesis is a record of the same event as that given by Berosus and stamped on the Assyrian tablets, though the Hebrew account is in a more refined and elevated form.

The period at which the great flood in Chaldæa occurred is unknown. The dates given in Berosus are mythical, and are based, no doubt, on a method of computation not now understood. So, also, the First Dynasty of kings after the flood covers one of those fabulous epochs in which tradition runs riot and history gropes in blindness.

At the beginning of the Second Dynasty there is, as yet, only a tinge of the morning dawn. Here it was that NIMROD, the great

<sup>1</sup>George Smith's *Assyrian Discoveries*, pp. 185-195; also, Duncker's *History of Antiquity*, pp. 243-245.



hunter, who is represented as being a descendant of Cush, flourished in Lower Mesopotamia. His dominion was at first along the sea-coast, but was soon extended northward as far as BABEL, which became one of his principal cities. The capital was Ur or Hur, situated on the right bank of the Euphrates a short distance above the mouth. The other chief seats of his power were the cities of Erech, Accad, and Calneh.

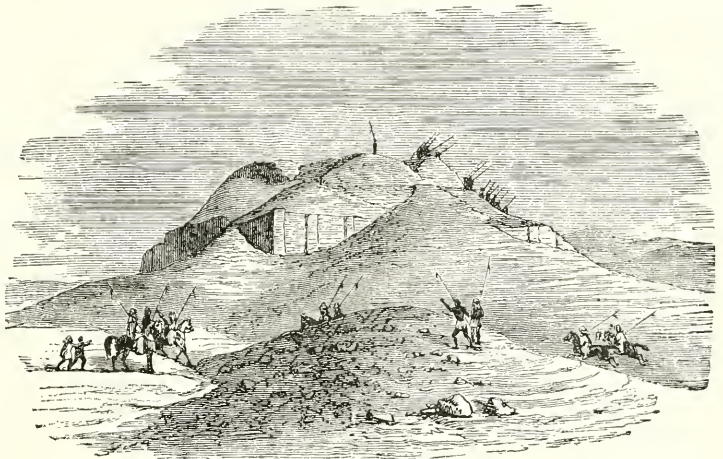
Tradition indicates that Nimrod was a warrior, as well as a hunter of wild beasts. As early as the time when the Book of Genesis was composed the name of Nimrod had passed into a proverb. The mixture of good and bad in his reputation is, no doubt, attributable to the fact that he was a tyrant as well as a defender—an oppressor of the people as well as a destroyer of lions. Very little is known of the details of his campaigns or the methods of his government, but his fame has reached through the intervening ages as that of Romulus pervades the history of ancient Rome.

After death Nimrod was deified, and was ever regarded by the Babylonians and Assyrians as one of the gods of the nation. His divine title was Bel-Nimrod, signifying *God of the Chase*. The city of Calneh, as the chief seat of his worship, was called by his name, and to this day the ruins and mounds which are so abundantly scattered over the district where the great hunter once held dominion, are, without distinction, designated by the name *Nimrud*.<sup>1</sup>

Except the first, the successors of Nimrod were less famous. Little is known of them

or their deeds. To this period belongs the retirement of the Semitic tribes from the region about Babylon and their concentration in Upper Mesopotamia on the Tigris. The primitive Phœnicians, too, living on the borders of the Persian Gulf, alarmed, perhaps, at the prowess of Nimrod, migrated westward to Canaan, and founded their ancient kingdom on the shores of the Mediterranean. Abraham, with his kinsmen, left Ur, and journeyed first up the Euphrates and afterwards to the west. The power established by Nimrod was thus left dominant from above Babylon to the sea.

After no great interval the mighty hunter was succeeded by URUKH, who was wellnigh as famous for monumental grandeur as Nim-



UR OF THE CHALDEES.

rod for war. Uruk is the earliest Chaldæan monarch of whom existing remains bear witness; of him the testimony is abundant. The burnt bricks and tablets containing his name and inscriptions are of a more primitive pattern than those of any other period. In the mounds and ruins the references to this king's reign are found in the lowest position, and the style of writing is more ancient than any other yet discovered in the country. The character of the buildings also indicates a very remote epoch. The bricks are unequal in size, and clay mixed with bitumen is the substitute for mortar.

The architectural style of Uruk's structures, though simple, is massive, in some instances suggesting if they do not rival the

<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding the almost universal tradition of Nimrod it should be borne in mind that thus far no single inscription or monumental trace of him or his reign has been discovered. If the existing remains of Chaldæa should be depended on as the sole source of our knowledge of early Babylonian history, we should be compelled to place the beginning with the succeeding reign of Uruk and to omit as mythical the story of Nimrod.

pyramids. The foundations of his temples are vast platforms of masonry, so broad and deep as to suggest a waste of human labor similar to the prodigal expenditures of toil in the works of ancient Egypt.

To the age of Uruk, belong the ruins of Warka. On the site of this ancient city<sup>1</sup> is the celebrated mound called by the natives the *Bowariyeh*. The general shape of the ruin is that of a cone or pyramid, but the ravages of time have marred the symmetry of the structure. Modern investigations have shown that this massive pile was originally a tower two hundred feet square at the base and two stories in height. The first story was built of sun-dried bricks of irregular shapes and sizes. At intervals of four or five feet layers of reeds were placed in the bitumen to give coherence to the whole. In the upper story, now fallen away in ruins, the central part was also of sun-dried bricks but faced on the outside with bricks which had been hardened by burning.

The present height of this ancient Chaldean temple is about one hundred feet above the level of the plain. But little is known of the original proportions or plan of the structure. In the ruin which remains the massive buttresses are still easily traced, and their dimensions indicate that the temple in its entirety was one of great height and grandeur. All the bricks comprising the buttresses are stamped with inscriptions and the layers are firmly cemented with bitumen. The cubic contents of the entire edifice have been estimated at three million feet, and the number of bricks employed in building it at thirty million.

On the burnt bricks of this ruin the name and praises of Uruk are of constant occurrence. Sometimes the simple name of the great monarch is stamped in the baked clay. Sometimes the inscription recites that "Uruk, king of Ur, king of Sumir and Accad, has built a temple to his lady, the goddess Nana." Again the legend runs that "Uruk has built the temple and fortress of Ur in honor of his Lord, the god Sin." Or again the words are, "The mighty Lord, king of Ur, may his name continue!"

<sup>1</sup>In Genesis called *Erech*.

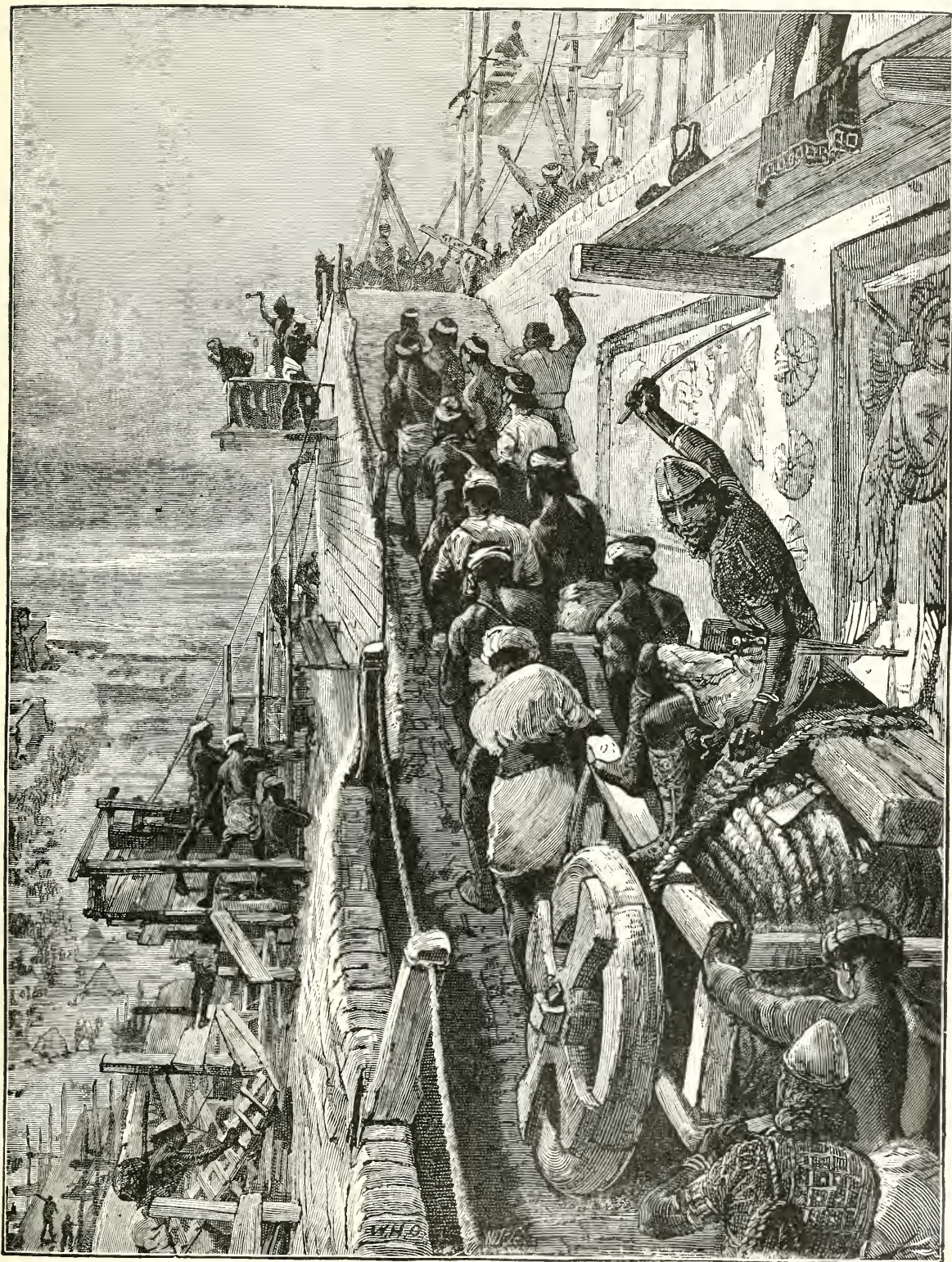
The temple of Mugheir, or Ur, also belongs to the times of Uruk, and is a ruin of equal note. Like that of Warka, it lay until recently buried under the rubbish of centuries. Carefully conducted excavations have now laid bare that part of the edifice which has been spared by the elements, and the explorer is able to trace the outline of what was once the temple of the Moon-god Hur. The four corners of the building—instead of the four sides, as has been common in nearly all countries ancient and modern—are set to the cardinal points of the compass,<sup>1</sup> so that the longer sides of the parallelogram constituting the ground-plan lie to the north-east and the south-west.

The foundation of this edifice is raised twenty feet above the level. The longer sides of the base are one hundred and ninety-eight feet and the shorter one hundred and thirty-three feet in length. The first story above the basement is about forty feet in height. This story is protected without by a wall ten feet in thickness composed of bricks burnt to redness in a kiln and carefully laid in bitumen. The second story, now mostly fallen away, has been of the same shape and general character as the first. Local tradition has preserved a notion of the third story, which is represented as being the shrine of the god to whom the temple was erected. Some tiles glazed with a blue enamel and some copper nails have been discovered in such a position as to leave the impression that they were a part of the materials employed in the construction of the immediate shrine of the deity.

Ruins similar to those of Warka and Mugheir are found in many parts of Chaldeæ. Calneh or Nipur and Larsa have remains only second in importance to those already described. Ever and anon the traveler comes upon some enormous heap of rubbish which on investigation proves to be the overgrown wreck of a fallen temple. In Calneh two of these mounds are found covering the fragments of buildings erected during the reign of Uruk. Both of these structures were temples, the first dedicated to Beltis and

<sup>1</sup>This feature of the Mugheir ruin is said to be common to all Chaldean temples.





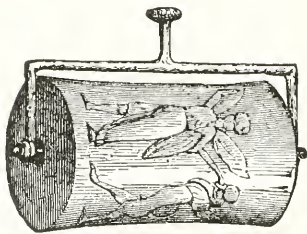
BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE OF WARKA, TIME OF URUKH.



the other to Bel-Nimrod. In Larsa the ruins show that the sun-god, San, was worshiped as the tutelary deity of the city.

The capital of Uruk's kingdom was the city of Ur. In the inscriptions he is sometimes designated as king of Ur—sometimes of Accad. It was in Ur that the building energies of his reign were chiefly displayed. In the ruins of this city his inscriptions are more abundant than those of any other monarch. In Upper Chaldea the traces of Uruk are less frequent. Babylon was then a newly founded town, and seems not to have risen to importance until the epoch following. After Ur, Warka held the second rank among the cities of the empire, Larsa and Calneh being next in importance.

After the death of Uruk the kingdom descended to ILGI, his son, of whom neither traditions nor inscriptions have preserved any lengthy account. The royal seal or signet used by the Chaldean and Assyrian kings was in the form of a small cylinder, having figures and characters engraved in the surface. This cylinder when rolled upon wax or other plastic substance left the king's name and emblems set in relief upon the material used in sealing. In one of the mounds near Warka



THE SEAL OF ILGI.

the signet-cylinder of Ilgi has been discovered, and is now preserved in the British Museum. The legend which it bears has been trans-

lated as follows: "For saving the life of Ilgi, from the mighty Lord, the king of Ur, son of Uruk."

By King Ilgi the public works of Ur, begun by his father, were carried forward to completion, and to him also is ascribed the repairing of two of the principal temples of Erech. It is known from the inscriptions that both Uruk and Ilgi were warlike princes, and that in addition to their fame as builders they won by force of arms the distinction of being known to after ages. Such is the meager outline of mingled fact and tradition, by

which the First Dynasty of Chaldean kings are preserved in the annals of modern times.

Meanwhile in the country of Elam, lying east of Chaldaea, a new power had risen, as warlike, perhaps, as the people of Ur and Babylon. The capital of this kingdom between the Tigris and the mountains was the ancient city of Susa. Around this center the mixed tribes of Aryans and Turanians had gathered into a monarchy at a time almost as remote as that of the founding of an empire on the Lower Euphrates. In the obscure epoch following the reign of Ilgi, the Elamite power became aggressive and made war upon the Chaldeans. Under the leadership of their great king, KUDUR-NAKHUNTA, they overran the country as far north as Babylon, sacked the cities, pillaged the temples, and carried off the images of the gods. This was the beginning of Dynasty II., the kings of which are designated by Berosus as *Median*—though without sufficient reason. For it is evident that the name Elamite or Susianian would more properly describe the monarchs of this line.

Though the dominion of Elam over Chaldaea was thus established it does not appear that the Elamite kings resided in the latter country. They chose instead their old capital Susa, and governed the Chaldeans by viceroy appointed over their principal cities. Thus did Kudur-Nakhunta himself, who established tributary kings in the conquered country. After him came the warlike king KUDUR-LAGAMER,<sup>1</sup> who while retaining his own court at Susa ruled in Mesopotamia by three of his vassals.

Having settled the affairs of the countries already under his authority, Kudur-Lagamer resolved on a great expedition, first into Assyria and afterwards into Canaan and Egypt. Raising a large army he advanced up the Euphrates, and thence westward against the Canaanitish tribes, who under their kings gathered in the valley of Siddim near the Dead Sea to oppose the progress of the eastern invader. Here was fought one of the first great battles recorded in history. Kudur-Lagamer was victorious, and the kings of

<sup>1</sup>The *Chedor-laomer* of Genesis.



Canaan were for a period of twelve years brought into subjection. After this they rebelled, and the Elamite monarch was again

After this battle, in which Lot, the nephew of Abraham, was taken prisoner, the Elamite army, burdened with spoils and captives, began



KUDUR-LAGAMER STORMING A TOWN IN CANAAN.

obliged to come against them. A second great battle was fought near the scene of the first, and, as before, Kudur-Lagamer was completely victorious. The power of the confederacy was apparently broken.

to withdraw towards Chaldæa, but when in the vicinity of Damascus, Abraham with a band of followers fell upon them by night and drove them in a rout across the desert. It was rather a panic than a victory, though



Abraham's band by their bold onset regained a large part of the booty. The effect of the check, however, was such as to discourage from further invasion the king of Chaldæa.

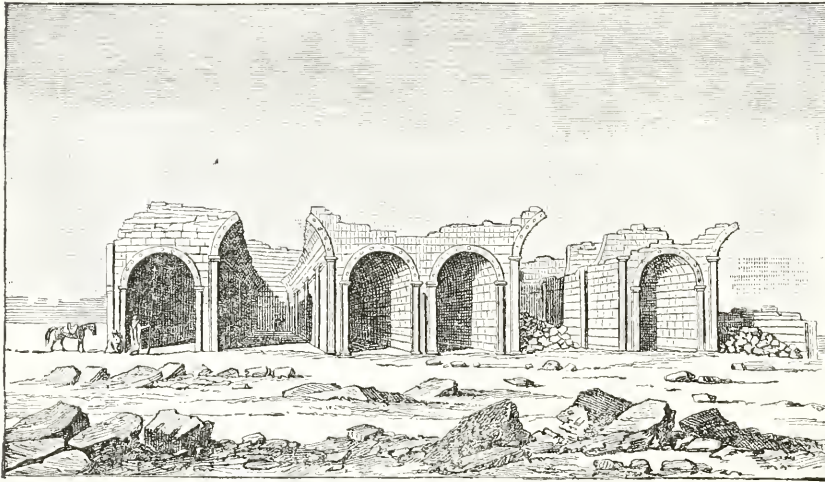
Of the subsequent monarchs of the Elamite or "Median" dynasty only three are known by name, and of the first of these, called **SINTI-SHIL-KHAK**, nothing except the name has been preserved. The second, named **KUDUR-MABUK**, is honored in the inscriptions with the title of "Conqueror of the West." He is represented as having enlarged and adorned the city of Ur. To him tradition also ascribes the distinction of having restored the Chaldean religion, which had been dispar-

aged during the preceding reigns. The temples were repaired, and the old gods brought back with honor to their pillaged shrines. The national pride of the Chaldeans was still further gratified by the removal of the king's court from Susa to the old capital Ur, and this city continued to be the seat of government during the reign of **ARID-SIN**, the son and successor of Kudur-Mabuk, and even to the end of the Second Dynasty, B. C. 2052.

The semi-authentic annals of these earlier periods of the Chaldean Empire give place in Dynasty III. to mere conjecture. In the scheme of Berosus eleven kings and a period of forty-eight years are assigned to the interval between the time of Arid-Sin and the accession of the fourth line of monarchs. Of

the history of events during these uncertain years no scrap has been recovered from either monument or tradition. It appears to have been a transitional epoch, during which the power of the Elamite kings and their viceroy in Chaldæa weakened and disappeared. Whether the sovereigns of Susa became less ambitious of foreign dominion, or whether the Chaldeans recovered by revolt and war their former independence, seems undiscoverable from the remoteness of the time and the confusion of the period.

The Fourth Dynasty was ushered in by the establishment of a line of native sovereigns, who held the throne of Chaldæa for four hundred and fifty-eight years. The kings of this line were forty-nine in number. One of the earlier monarchs of the dynasty was **ISMI-DAGON**, who certainly occupied the throne before the middle of the nineteenth century B. C. His reign is chiefly noted for the extension



RUINS OF SUSU.

of Chaldean authority into the upper part of the Mesopotamian valley.

The ascendancy of Babylon over the country afterwards called Assyria dates from this period. **SHAMAS-VUL**, one of the king's sons, who acted as his viceroy in the upper districts of the empire, built a temple at Kileh-Shergat. The inscriptions give other evidences of the preponderating influence of the Chaldean monarchs towards the north, and show conclusively that the power of Assyria had not yet risen to importance. For a considerable period the affairs of this kingdom—if kingdom it may be called—continued to be administered by satraps and governors sent out from Babylon.

**Ismi-Dagon** was succeeded on the throne



by a son, called GURGUNA. This king is chiefly remembered as the builder of the great cemeteries at Ur, perhaps the most remarkable ruins in Chaldæa. After Gurguna came NARAM-SIN, doubtless his son, who was the builder of the great temple in the city of Agana. His reign is memorable as the time when the seat of government was transferred to Babylon, which by this epoch had grown to be the metropolis of Chaldæa.

The tendency to remove the capital farther and farther up the valley betokens the increase of population in Upper Mesopotamia and the gradual spread of civilization northward. The seat of the Empire, which in the times of Uruk had been at Ur, was transferred first to Warka and thence to the more recent Babylon, where it remained until the rise of Assyria.

The date of Naram-Sin's reign was about the middle of the eighteenth century B. C. He was the first of a long line of sovereigns in the Fourth Dynasty whose names add the word *Sin*, the same being the Chaldee appellation of the Moon-god, whose worship was a chief element in the religion of the times.

After Naram-Sin came SIN-SHADA, who was the builder of the upper terrace in the temple of Warka, now the ruin of Bowariyeh. Next was TUR-SIN, the greatest monarch of his times. He was the founder of the city Abu-Sharein, the ruins of which bear witness to the introduction of a new style of architecture, improved in its structural character and richer in ornament than the building of previous times. Here it is, also, that the most satisfactory traces of the simpler arts are found. Stone knives and chisels and hatchets are discovered everywhere in the ruins; but implements of metal, except a few imperfect specimens of gold and bronze, are wanting during this period. Iron seems to have been used only in ornaments for the person.

Of RIM-SIN, the last monarch of this line, not much is known, except what is contained on a single tablet found among the ruins of Ur. Immediately preceding his reign was that of the king NUR-VUL, whose name occurs in the list of Berosus, but of whom no monumental record has been discovered. It is evi-

dent, indeed, that during the times of the *Sin* kings the power of the Fourth Dynasty declined to such an extent as to invite invasion and conquest. The reigns of the later group of these monarchs covered the period from the close of the eighteenth century to the year B. C. 1546.

The name *Arabian* is given by Berosus to the Fifth Dynasty of Chaldean kings. But it is by no means certain that the great conqueror, KHAMMU-RABI, by whom Dynasty IV. was overthrown and supplanted, was out of Arabia. There is no doubt that the dissensions and weakness of the Chaldean kings of the *Sin* series had made the country an easy prey to an ambitious leader and his armies, from whatever quarter they might come.

It is possible that the conquest of Khammu-Rabi was no more than a revolution effected by a strong-willed chieftain of one of the lower Mesopotamian cities. According to Berosus this dynasty was composed of nine kings, but the names of fifteen sovereigns of the line have been deciphered from the inscriptions and tablets; from which it appears that in several places the less important kings—perhaps those who reigned for a shorter time than a year—were dropped from the lists. Nor is it quite certain in what order the reigns of the so-called Arabian monarchs occurred.

There is no doubt, however, that the first of this line was the great Khammu-Rabi, whose name is associated with many important enterprises. He it was who introduced the system of artificial irrigation, by which large districts in the country about Babylon were converted into gardens. The great canal, afterwards known as the river of Khammu-Rabi, through which the waters of the Euphrates were carried into the waste places between the rivers, was constructed during this reign. A white stone tablet preserved in the Louvre, at Paris, recites that the canal cut by Khammu-Rabi became a blessing to the Babylonians, converting desert plains into well-watered fields and spreading around fertility and abundance.

For himself Khammu-Rabi built a new palace at Kalwadha, near the present site of

Baghdad. He also repaired the great temple of the sun at Senkereh.<sup>1</sup> His reign extended from the middle of the sixteenth century B. C. to about the year 1520. After his death the crown descended to his son, SAMSU-ILUNA, of whom only one series of inscriptions have been discovered. His reign belonged to the last quarter of the century, after which the lists are broken by a gap of about seventy-five years.

With the reappearance of the line in the person of KARA-*IN-DAS*, we come to a group of five kings, between whom and the monarchs of the rising kingdom of Assyria on the north, political relations begin to appear. It is the time when Assyria first competes with Chaldaea for supremacy in Mesopotamia. The chronology becomes more certain, inasmuch as the records of the two monarchies, by counter-references, can be used to check the errors of either. Between the two kingdoms the relations were sometimes warlike and sometimes peaceful. Now a treaty is made, and now the violation of a compact leads to invasion. In one instance a revolution occurs, in which the Chaldean king, KARA-KHAR-DAS is overthrown and killed by an insurrectionist named Nazi-Bugas, whereupon an Assyrian army marches down the valley, destroys Nazi-Bugas, and restores to the throne the brother of the murdered king. At another time the daughter of Asshur-Upalit, king of Assyria, is given in marriage to PURRA-PURIYAS, monarch of Chaldaea, and indeed on every hand are discovered the traces of the increasing influence of the northern kingdom. The last of the five monarchs just mentioned was KURRI-GALZU, relics of whose reign are found chiefly at Mugheir<sup>2</sup> and Akkerkuf.

The latter city is reputed to have been founded by this king, of whom it contains several important inscriptions. The remaining sovereigns of the Fifth Dynasty are SAGA-RAKTIGAS, who built a temple of the sun at Sippara, AMMIDI-KAGA, and six others, whose names occur in a list of the kings in such a way as to classify them with Khammu-Rabi.

Such is the somewhat meager outline of the civil and political history of ancient

Chaldaea, and of the broken genealogy of her princes down to the time when Assyrian influence became dominant in Lower Mesopotamia. The date of this event has been fixed at B. C. 1301. In this year Tiglath-Adar, king of Assyria, invaded Chaldaea, captured Babylon, and reduced the country to a dependency of his empire. It is not to be understood that the power of Chaldaea as a nation was destroyed or that the political condition of the country was very greatly changed from what it had been during the times of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties.

With the accession of Dynasty VI., which is said by Berosus to have embraced forty-five kings, the Babylonian monarchs became and continued mere viceroys, tributary to Assyria, so that, in one sense, the civil history of Chaldaea may be said to have ended with the Assyrian conquest. However this question may be considered, the beginning of the fourteenth century marks an epoch in the progress of the Lower Empire, and is generally regarded as the end of the first monarchy established on the banks of the Euphrates.

The ancient kingdom of Chaldaea was, next to Egypt, the oldest civil government of antiquity. The conditions under which the empire was established were very similar to those which gave shape to early civilization in the valley of the Nile. The great men of Chaldaea were, first of all, Nimrod, who was the Romulus of the kingdom. After him was Uruk, the Builder, who gave to Chaldaea her material grandeur. Nimrod warred against the adverse elements of primitive savagery; Uruk bestowed colossal energies on monumental forms, and left his memory to the temples of the gods rather than to heroic traditions. Kudur-Lagamer, likewise, may well be regarded as great. He was a conqueror—one of the earliest known to history—and though his conquests beyond the western desert could hardly be expected to remain as an integral part of the Empire, yet the military impulse given by him to the nation which he ruled continued for centuries. For a short period he controlled the destinies of a people who were dispersed from the eastern limits of Susiana to the Dead Sea on the west, a dis-

<sup>1</sup> The ancient *Larsa*.

<sup>2</sup> The ancient *Ur*.



tance of twelve hundred miles, while from north to south the breadth of his dominions was scarcely less than five hundred miles. Though he and his successors were unable to retain control of his widely extended territory, he nevertheless demonstrated the possibility of establishing vast empires embracing many peoples and languages, and thus became the prototype of those great oriental conquerors whose deeds constitute so large a part of Ancient History.

The kingdom of ancient Chaldæa is more interesting to us from its antiquity than from its territorial extent or its material grandeur. At a time when all the rest of Asia west of the Altai and the Himalayas was slumbering in night the Cushite tribes of the Lower Euphrates emerged from darkness, and substituted for the coarse manners of barbarism the institutions of primitive civilization—the home, the city, the state. These people betook themselves to the quiet pursuits of the field and to the erection and decoration of the temples of the gods, while the Semitic and Aryan tribes on the north and west were still nomads, preying upon nature, living by the chase.

From this ancient seat of refinement a knowledge of science and letters and art was gradually diffused into Assyria, and after-

wards into Media and Persia. The method of writing employed by the various races inhabiting these countries is all traceable to the primitive type employed by the Chaldæans. So that it may be fairly said that Chaldæa was the mother of civilization in Western Asia.

Belonging to the period here considered (2458–1301 B. C.), the names and fragments of the histories of about thirty kings have been checked off from the lists of Berosus and verified by existing monuments. Further researches in Lower Mesopotamia will doubtless yield still more satisfactory results; and with an amount of exploration and scholarly criticism equal to that which has been given to the valley of the Nile, it is probable that Chaldean history can be as clearly written as that of Egypt. For the present we are compelled to content ourselves with an outline, rather than a narrative, of the famous kingdom founded by Nimrod and terminated by the conquest of Tiglath-Adar, of Assyria. In connection with the history of the latter country, whatever is known of the viceroys reigning at Babylon, and of the progress of the country over which they ruled down to the times of Cyrus the Great, will be narrated as it is suggested by the more important history of the Assyrians.

## CHAPTER IX.—SCIENCE AND ART.



OR their learning the Chaldæans have been proverbial for three thousand years. Doubtless the country at the head of the Persian Gulf was that land of fabulous wisdom

known by the ancients as THE EAST. The great poets and historians of Rome designated by the name CHALDEAN whoever was famous in a knowledge of the stars, the lore of books, and the gift of prophecy. There is no doubt that long before the language of the Hebrews became a fit vehicle for literary expression there were in Lower Mesopotamia

men worthy to be called philosophers. The traditions of antiquity point to two cities as the fountains of human wisdom—Memphis in Egypt, and Babylon of the Chaldees.

But learning and philosophy grow up slowly. They have their roots in those homely arts by which human life is sustained and invigorated. All the refinements of civilization rest upon the two fundamental facts of agriculture and architecture. The first stage of the evolution out of barbarism is marked by plowing and building. Where the plow is unknown and the hammer unheard, the tribes of men will never reach beyond the development of hunters and nomads.

In ancient Chaldæa the agricultural life was vividly suggested by the aspect and character of the valley. A level and unobstructed alluvial plain stretched from river to river. What seeds soever were scattered in this mellow soil sprang into vigorous life. The primitive dwellers in these flats were abundantly and certainly rewarded for their labor. The native grains and fruits were refined by cultivation, and the overplus of the harvest suggested new wants and the possibilities of commerce.

The most fruitful of the districts soon gathered the most enterprising population. The growing village gave token of progress. Then came the town, the city, the temples of the gods. The earliest buildings of Chaldæa were cabins constructed by bending into arches the tall stems of growing plants, interwoven with reeds, and covered with mats of rushes. Soon the strong trunk of the palm-tree was substituted for the native reed in the construction of the frame, and instead of a barricade of matting, a coat of plastering, composed of mud and bitumen, was laid upon the wall.

In a mild and equable climate such houses might well suffice for the abodes of men. Villages and towns might be so constructed, wherein civilized peoples could live in comfort and prosperity. But as society advanced the religious impulse and public spirit coöperated to demand and to produce a higher style of architecture. The temples of the gods must be imposing and ornate, and to this end some material more enduring than reeds and trunks of palms must be procured. In this stage of their development men generally resort to stone; but the Chaldæans were here at a disadvantage. What nature has so abundantly supplied in most countries is entirely wanting in Lower Mesopotamia. In the whole country between Samarah and the sea there is not a single quarry of stone. The peculiar character of early Babylonian architecture can be traced to this remarkable feature in the physical structure of the country. The Arabian quarries on the west yielded only a coarse sandstone; the distance was great, and the intervening plain, for the most part, an oozy and

impassable marsh. The absence of neighboring hills,

“Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,”

imposed on the Chaldæans the necessity of selecting from the bosom of nature some material less enduring than that which has given immortality to the ruins of Egypt. Except to a very limited extent and only in peculiar situations, such as in the exposed part of an important wall, is any stone found among the remains of Babylonian greatness.

Clay in the form of bricks and tiles, was the natural substitute, and of this an excellent article was abundantly procurable.

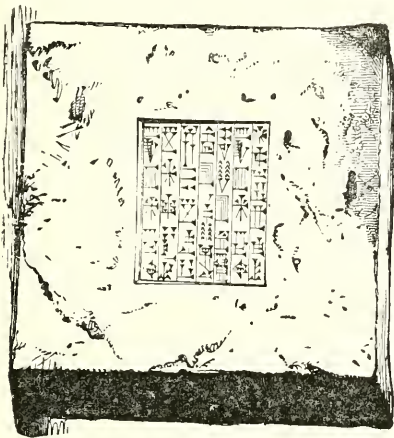
In the more ancient ruins of Chaldæa, the bricks are of the sun-dried variety; and though, in those parts which have been freely exposed to the action of the elements only dust and shapeless fragments remain, yet, in the inner and more protected situations the bricks are as well preserved and firm as when, four thousand years ago, they were laid in wall and buttress. The introduction of the kiln so greatly improved the quality of bricks as to make them a fair substitute for stone, nor does it appear that the art of hardening clay by the action of fire has been much improved beyond the primitive methods employed by the masons of Chaldæa.

The early builders of the Mesopotamian towns generally used both kinds of bricks in the same edifice, constructing the central parts and inner walls of the sun-dried variety and facing the walls without and parts exposed with bricks burnt in a kiln. The harder and more durable material was thus made to protect the perishable from disintegration under the action of the weather. In cases where buildings were constructed wholly of bricks baked in the sun, the walls—otherwise weak and unstable—were strengthened by building in, at intervals of four or five feet, thick layers of reed matting, which were allowed to project beyond the edge of the wall, thus forming an external protection as well as giving coherence to the mass. The burnt bricks of Chaldæa were large in size and in shape peculiar. The side surface was near a foot square, and the thickness about two and a fourth



inches. Those bricks which were intended for the corners and angles were molded in triangular form or other shapes adapted to the purpose, while such as were intended for the arches were given the shape of wedges.

In color the kiln-dried bricks were generally of a yellowish tinge, sometimes a dark blue, or more rarely a pale red. The sun-baked bricks were more variable in size, some being as small as six inches square by two inches thick, and some being as much as seven inches in thickness by sixteen inches in length and breadth. The color of these is scarcely darker than the native clay, which, owing to



BRICK OF BABYLON, TWELVE INCHES SQUARE.<sup>1</sup>

the absence of iron in the soil, is much lighter than in most countries.

In order to cement their walls into a compact mass the Chaldæans employed two kinds of mortar. The first was mere clay or mud mixed with chopped straw, the other bitumen. The latter was the better material, binding together so firmly the bricks between which it was placed that even at the present day they can not be separated without a heavy blow. The use of bitumen succeeded the use of clay at the same time that the kiln-burnt succeeded the sun-dried variety of bricks.

The principal ruins of ancient Chaldæa—Bowariyeh and Mugheir—have already been described in connection with the reign of Uruk. The temple of Abu-Sharein was of the same general character, though somewhat

more refined in its proportions and style than were the edifices at Warka and Ur. It is one of the few structures of true Chaldean date in which stone is extensively employed. The proximity of a quarry in the neighboring Arabian hills is sufficient to explain this rare departure from the use of brick; but it is not so easy to account for the presence of pieces of agate, alabaster, and marble, carefully cut and polished, which have been discovered in abundance scattered about the base of the edifice. Small plates of gold and gilt-headed nails, employed, no doubt, in internal ornamentation, have likewise been found in the ruin.

The Chaldean temples, though massive and imposing, were evidently wanting in architectural beauty. In the level and unvarying plain in which they were situated, they were, no doubt, grand and impressive objects; but the absence of external ornament and of the thousand effects which art so readily produces in the construction of great buildings, must have rendered the temples of Lower Mesopotamia, with their somber outer walls and huge buttresses and unsightly air-holes, devoid of beauty and attractiveness.

In the inner parts, especially in the sacred shrine of the deity to whom the temple was dedicated, considerable artistic skill was displayed in ornamenting the wood-work and the images of the god. Plates of blue enamel, nails of copper and of gold, and the bits of alabaster already referred to, indicate that the inner shrines of temples were decorated in a pleasing and artistic manner; but, beyond this, the great structures of Chaldæa were, like the pyramids, dependent for their effect upon the mere grandeur and massiveness of their aspect.

Of the common buildings—dwellings, houses, huts—not much is known. Only a few structures of this sort have been preserved. The outlines of one dwelling-house have been traced in the excavations made at Ur. The foundation was a brick platform, raised considerably above the surface. The house itself was in the form of a cross, irregular in outline and wanting in symmetry of proportions. The floors were of burnt brick

<sup>1</sup>The inner inscription contains the name of Nebuchadnezzar.

well laid in bitumen, and the walls were plastered with gypsum. In the chambers of a house discovered at Abu-Sharein more elaborate decoration is found. The walls are ornamented with designs in color-frescoes in red, black, and white; figures of birds, beasts, and men, carefully drawn on the fine, firm plaster of the walls.

The compartments of Chaldean houses were generally long and narrow, and into these doors opened directly from without. The roofs were principally of wood, and framed so as to lie flat from wall to wall. Sometimes an arched roof is found, high and regular, well built of bricks and pointed with bitumen.

By what means the light was admitted into the Chaldean houses the excavations have thus far failed to show. No windows have been discovered in the walls; but this may be accounted for by the fact that only the lower part of the walls, to the height of six or eight feet, remain of what was once a story of considerable elevation. It is to be greatly regretted that the building material employed by the ancient inhabitants of Chaldea was not like that of Egypt—everlasting.

After the buildings, public and private, which have been preserved on the banks of the Lower Euphrates, the objects of next importance to the historian are the burying-places of the dead. The tombs of Chaldea are so plentiful and so thickly populated as to give rise to the conjecture that the dead of the Assyrians were brought from the north to be interred in the sacred land. The quantity of human remains in certain burying-grounds is thought to be too great to have been derived from the people of the adjacent district. Large spaces are literally filled with bones and relics of the dead. Sometimes the coffins have been piled one upon another to the depth of *from thirty to sixty feet*, and for miles out into the desert the very soil underfoot seems to be nothing but the accumulated dust of dead races.

In some of these localities the relics are from widely separated epochs; but in other places the remains are homogeneous, being evidently gathered from a given period of

Chaldean history. The position and quality of the relics, the nature of the accompanying ornaments, and particularly the character of the coffins in which the remains are inclosed, are generally sufficient to determine the date at which the burying-ground was peopled. None of the remains found in these vast charnels belong to a time more recent than the middle of the sixth century B. C., while many are to be referred to the earlier, even the earliest, epochs of the national history.

In disposing of the dead the Chaldeans employed several methods of sepulture. In the first of these the body was laid prone in a brick vault. The chamber was about seven feet in length by three and a-half feet in breadth and five feet high. The floor and walls were made of sun-dried bricks carefully laid in mud or bitumen, and the side walls were closed in above with an arch. On the floor was spread a matting of reeds, and on this the body was laid so as to rest on the left side. The fingers of the right hand were placed upon a copper bowl, which was set in the palm of the left. A single brick was placed beneath the head for a pillow. Articles of ornament and use were set in different parts of the vault, and vessels containing food and drink were placed near the head of the dead. Vaults of this style seem to have been in many instances family tombs, the remains of several bodies being frequently found in the same chamber. Besides the brick vaults, several kinds of coffins were used in earth burial. The first of these was a burnt clay box in the shape of the cover of a dish. In the bottom of the tomb a foundation was laid of bricks. This was covered with mats, as in the brick vaults; on these mats the body of the dead was laid, and over the body a large earthenware trough was turned so as to inclose and cover the remains. The huge dish thus inverted over the dead was generally seven feet long, two and a-half feet broad at the bottom, and three feet high. The covers in the graves of children were only about one-half the size of those in the tombs of adults, the latter being the largest specimens of pottery which have been discovered in any country. In a few instances two skeletons



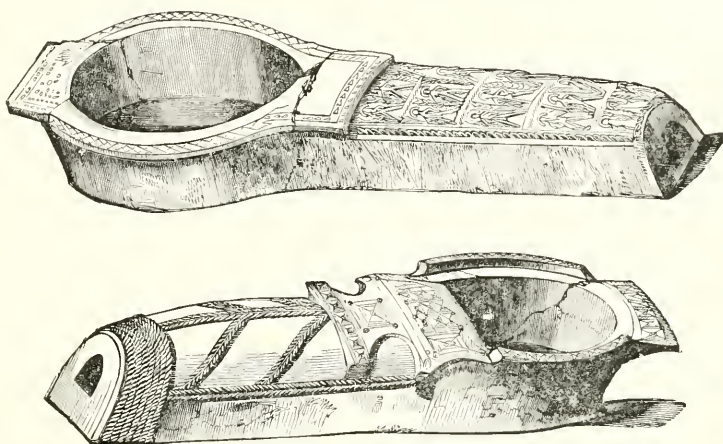
have been found under a single cover, but in most cases only one body was placed under each coffin. Arranged about the dead, as in the family vaults, articles of food and ornament were set, the disposition of the body being as in brick chambers already described. The dish-cover coffins were buried at a great depth, none of those discovered at Mugheir being within less than seven or eight feet of the surface.<sup>1</sup>

Another kind of coffins employed by the Chaldeans consisted of two large earthenware vessels, shaped like ancient water-jars, set mouth to mouth and sealed with bitumen. Each jar was about three feet deep, the whole inner space of six feet being sufficient to contain the body of a full-sized adult. Within the earthen cylinder thus formed by setting the two jars mouth to mouth the dead was placed, and the whole covered with earth. For it was the manner of the Chaldeans to arrange the coffins containing the bodies of their dead in rows on the ground and then cover them from sight, gradually raising a mound over the place selected for burial. When a sufficient depth had been attained, another layer was placed above the first, and then another, till the surface of the mound was sometimes raised sixty feet above the original level.

The sepulchral mounds were carefully drained. Long shafts of clay tiling extended from the surface to the original ground level, insuring a perfect drainage. The shafts were composed of a succession of rings or joints about two feet in diameter, each joint being skillfully fitted into the next and sealed with bitumen. At the top each shaft contracts to a

diameter of about six inches. The whole tube is filled within and packed without with a mass of broken pottery, the whole being as well adapted to the purpose of a perfect drain as any modern contrivance. By the means here described the tomb-mounds of Lower Mesopotamia have been completely preserved from the effects of dampness, the contents being generally found as dry as the dust of dust.

Their large dish-cover coffins and huge stacks of drainage tiling show the Chaldeans to have been unusually skillful in the design and manufacture of potteries. Other specimens of their work are more elegant and artistic.



GLAZED COFFINS, FROM WARKA.

Many jars, vases, and drinking-cups, belonging to the earlier times of the monarchy, bear evidence of careful manipulation and beauty of finish. Some are of rude and primitive patterns, resembling the aboriginal pottery of Mexico and Peru; but others are produced from the finest clay, skillfully turned on the potter's wheel, and of designs equaling in beauty the second class of Greek vases. In a few instances the artist has, with considerable success, imitated the forms of animals, but this kind of art is generally found on burnt tablets prepared especially to contain the reliefs. In such works the figures most frequently modeled are those of lions, bulls, and men, and the prevailing idea is that of a combat—the man overcoming the lion or the lion devouring the man.

Of the signet-cylinders mention has been

<sup>1</sup> It is quite probable that a part of this unusual depth of burial may be accounted for on the supposition of subsequent accumulation on the surface. The "rain of dust," continuing for some thousands of years, has no doubt heaped upon the Chaldean dead some additional depth of earth.

made in a previous chapter. These peculiar official ornaments were generally of jasper or chalcedony, and were used by their owners to impress their seals on soft clay tablets employed in writing. The cylinders were about a-half inch in diameter by three inches in length. Through the axis a hole was bored and a metal parallelogram—bronze or copper—one side of which passed through the opening, was attached, and by means of this the cylinder was rolled upon the tablet. The ornament was suspended to the wrist or neck of the owner by a chain or string fastened to the metal frame. On the surface of the signet, as already noticed, the design of the seal adopted by the wearer was cut in reverse, so that the impression was made in relief. The engraving presented in these ancient relics of a dead empire is frequently of such elegance and delicacy as to excite the admiration, if not the envy, of modern lapidaries.

The tools and implements employed by the Chaldeans were rude and imperfect. In the oldest ruins flint knives, hatchets, and hammers of stone abound, while articles of bronze are less plentifully distributed. Of the latter material the specimens are chiefly arrow-heads, knives, hatchets, and sickles. The stone implements are generally indicative of some progress in the use of materials and the adaptation of means to ends, but in many instances the tools are of so primitive a form, and so rudely fashioned, as to excite surprise that the articles produced with them should exhibit so much elegance.

At the first the precious metal of the Chaldeans was iron, its use being limited to ornamentation. Several of the other metals—silver, zinc, platinum—were unknown. Articles of gold and copper are plentifully found in the mounds, while relics of tin and lead are extremely rare. Gold, like iron, was chiefly employed in the manufacture of ornaments, and copper, in the form of bronze, furnished among the Chaldeans, as among most ancient peoples, the main reliance in the way of metallic instruments, particularly in the fabrication of weapons.

Of the textile fabrics of Chaldæa not much is known. It could hardly be expected that

the perishable product of looms, whose owners have slumbered in dust for four thousand years, should have survived to excite our curiosity. Only a few shreds of linen and some scraps of tasseled head-dress, occasionally found in the tombs, remain as a token of the work done by the weavers and spinners of Lower Mesopotamia. In the book of Joshua we are told how Achan lost his life for coveting a Babylonish garment which he had found along with a wedge of gold among the spoils of Jericho; and the reputation which Babylon afterwards enjoyed as the chief seat of the costliest manufactures of the world, leaves little doubt that her skill in this line of human industry had been of a high order even from the earliest times.

It was in a clear apprehension of the laws of nature, rather than in a useful application of knowledge to the practical affairs of life, that the Chaldeans surpassed most of the nations of antiquity. The featureless plain of Mesopotamia was in a great measure devoid of vivid terrestrial phenomena. Those aspects of the natural world, which in most countries are so complex and variable as to baffle investigation and stimulate the growth of myths, were in Chaldæa, as in Egypt, more regular, and suggestive of an orderly sequence. Here nature seemed calm and majestic. The exact point at which a star cut the horizon could be noted from evening to evening. The return of any given phenomenon in the stately progress of the skies might well provoke attention and excite expectancy of another recurrence. The serene climate and pellucid Chaldæan heavens brought the people ever face to face with the stars. That science rather than poetry should be the favorite diversion of the Chaldæan sages was a natural result of their situation and surroundings.

The observation of the skies, so assiduously cultivated on the Lower Euphrates, laid the foundation of astronomy and chronology. Diodorus truthfully declares that the Chaldeans were far before all other nations in their knowledge of the heavens. Here it was that the relation of the solar circuit to the other cycles of the system was discovered and recorded. It was seen that the sun completes



his course in the heavens in about twelve rounds of the moon, and, therefore, was the year divided into twelve months of thirty days each; and when this was found to measure the year inaccurately a system of intercalulations was introduced by which the calendar year was made to correspond with the sidereal year of three hundred and sixty-five and a fourth days.

The progress of the sun through the heavens was mapped for each of the twelve months, and thus the twelve signs of the Zodiac were established. The deviations of the planets from the path of the sun on either side determined the boundaries of the zodiacal signs, and each sign was divided into thirty degrees by the daily progress of the solar orb.

The phases of the moon fixed the limits of the week at seven days, and after the analogy of the year each day was divided into twelve parts or hours. Thus from nature were deduced the elements of the duodecimal system of computation. The hour was divided into sixty parts—five times twelve. The cubit consisted of twenty-four finger-breadths—two times twelve. The *soos* was a cycle of sixty years; the *ner* was ten times sixty, and the *sar* was the square of sixty, or three thousand six hundred years.

For determining the distance from point to point in the open skies the breadth of the sun's disc was taken as a unit. On the morning of the equinox, at the precise moment when the upper limb of the sun was seen to cut the horizon, an orifice in a water-jar was opened and the fluid allowed to run until the full disc was risen. The water discharged was carefully measured and was found to be 1-720th of the quantity discharged through the same orifice by sunrise on the following morning—from which the inference was drawn that the whole orbit of the sun is measured by seven hundred and twenty times the breadth of his own disc. This ingenious method of observation furnished a unit both of space and time, the former being one-half a degree, and the latter, two minutes, or one-thirtieth of an hour. The distance which an active foot-courier could walk in thirty units of time, that is, an hour, was called a *parasang*,

and one-thirtieth of a *parasang* was a *stadium*. The stadium was divided into three hundred and sixty parts called *cubits*, and sixty cubits constituted a *plethron*.<sup>1</sup>

By the application of these simple measures to the terrestrial and celestial spheres the Chaldeans obtained very extraordinary results—results which may be fairly called scientific. They discovered and recorded the fact that in a period of two hundred and twenty-three months the lunar eclipses return in the same order. The establishment of this cycle gave the length of the synodic and periodic months with so much accuracy that modern astronomers have found the calculations true to within less than five seconds of our time.

The Babylonian tablets have already furnished a list of ten eclipses of the moon and three conjunctions of planets which were recorded by observers in the years 721 and 720 B. C. Callisthenes, who accompanied Alexander the Great on his expedition to Babylon, sent to Aristotle from that city a set of tablets containing astronomical records reaching back to about the middle of the twenty-third century before our era. Although these records are lost, and although the data on which they were calculated must have been in some particulars erroneous, yet they were no doubt genuine astronomical tables which—had they been preserved—would possess for modern astronomers unusual interest and value. It does not appear that the astronomical science of the Chaldeans was tinctured with astrological superstitions, or that the baleful effects of priestcraft had blurred the natural beauty of the skies.

Some knowledge of arithmetic was necessarily precedent to progress in astronomy. Nor is it a matter of conjecture that the Chaldeans had considerable skill in the science of numbers. Two systems of notation were

<sup>1</sup> The Babylonian cubit was equal to a fraction over one and two-thirds feet, more exactly 21 inches, or 525 millimeters. Hence the following table of equivalents:

1 cubit	= 21 inches.
60 cubits	= 1 plethron = 35 yards.
6 plethra	= 1 stadium = 38.2 rods.
30 stadia	= 1 parasang = 3.58 miles.

employed, the one duodecimal, the other decimal. In writing the numbers, only two elementary characters, the wedge (▼) and the arrow-head (>), were employed. These characters were combined in a manner at once simple and comprehensive, so as to constitute a complete and satisfactory table of notation. The chief defects of the system were the repetition of the same character to express different numbers, the absence of the Arabic principle of giving a figure a value according to its rank, and the want of a cipher or zero. Taken all in all, the method was superior to that in use among the Greeks and Romans.

The system of weights employed by the Chaldeans was based upon their system of measure. A cubit of water, weighing about sixty-six pounds, was divided into sixty equal parts, and each part called a *log*—being about five-sixths of a pint. This was the unit of measure; and the weight of this unit, called a *mina*, was the unit of weight. The oldest specimen of a weight which antiquarian research has rescued from the past is a duck-shaped stone belonging to King Ilgi of Ur. The simple inscription, “ten *mina* of Ilgi,” tells the story of its date and use.

Investigation has shown that the Chaldeans, like most other nations, had one system of weights for the common articles of the market-place, and another for the precious metals and gems. Instead of the imperial weights employed for all other purposes, gold and silver were estimated by a more delicate system, in which peculiar circular pieces or rings of the precious metals were taken as the units of weight. The denominations were the *talent*, the *shekel*, etc.—names afterwards adopted by the Hebrews and the Greeks.

The system of writing employed by the Chaldeans is worthy of special consideration. Like the hieroglyphics of Egypt, the Babylonian system was, for a long time, the puzzle of European scholarship. Its first peculiarity is that all the characters employed are rectangular, and the second is that the characters are nearly all sloping or wedge-like in form, from which the name *cuneiform*, meaning wedge-shaped, has been adopted to describe this species of writing.

Philosophically considered, such writing is of the same nature as the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians. Both systems began with the pictorial representation of objects by means of lines. In the case of the hieroglyphics the development was rather in the use of curves, while, for some reason, in the system of the Assyrian and Persian nations, the use of right lines predominated. As a result of these two tendencies the curve-line figures of beasts and birds was longer retained in the writing of the Egyptians and sooner lost by cursive abbreviations in the writing of the Chaldeans. The gradual departure from the old pictorial type, and the substitution, first of an emblematic, and afterwards of a phonetic type to represent the name of the object rather than the object itself, and finally the use of this phonetic type in spelling alphabetically the words of the language, were the same in both the hieroglyphic and cuneiform systems. Each passed in like manner through successive stages of degeneration until the arbitrary alphabet triumphed over the pictorial symbols.

The appearance of cuneiform writing is peculiarly angular and jagged. The words are produced by combinations of the two simple types, the arrow-head (>) and the wedge (▼). In many instances the character is a monogram rather than a word spelled alphabetically, showing that the process of phoneticizing the language was arrested before it was complete. In other cases the characters used are determinatives, being affixed to certain words to indicate their classification. Thus a given determinative indicates that the word to which it belongs is the name of a being in the class of gods; another, that the object is classified with men; another, with countries; a fourth, with towns, etc. It is probable that the determinatives had, as a general rule, no phonetic influence on the words to which they belonged, their function being merely official, like that of a capital letter in English. It appears that, in some instances, however, the determinative was pronounced *instead* of the word to which it was affixed.

The writing of the Chaldeans is almost as



abundant as that of the Egyptians. It is preserved in the two forms of tablets and bricks. In all cases the writing was impressed on the clay while moist and plastic. The inscriptions on the bricks are all of a royal origin, recounting the story of the building in which they are found, the name of the king, his titles, his glory and renown. The tablet inscriptions are more frequently of a private character, referring to such matters as deeds, contracts, and personal records. The writing is from left to right in all cases except on the signet-cylinders, on which the inscriptions are of course reversed. Where the legend is printed on bricks, only a part of each brick—a square near the middle—is occupied with the inscription, which seems, in most cases, to have been stamped upon the clay, but in others to have been engraved or cut in the surface with a tool.

The tablets of the Chaldeans are plates of baked clay, slightly convex on each side, resembling a small pillow, flattened to the thickness of two or three inches. The shape is not always regular, nor does it appear that the makers cared much for the beauty of the material which was to contain a record of their thought. The sides of the tablets were thickly covered with cuneiform inscriptions. The plates were then carefully burnt, and when this was done a new layer of clay was spread over the surface upon which the inscription was repeated. The whole was baked a second time, so that the inner legend was securely incased in a shell of imperishable tiling. If the outer inscription should be defaced, the shell could be broken away, revealing the original within. And this original could even be repeated by casting new clay in the concave mold of the outer crust, for this would contain in relief an exact duplicate of the first inscription on the inner tablet.

On many of the plates, in addition to the matter contained in the regular inscription, the signet-cylinder of the maker or contractor has been rolled across the surface, producing in relief the legend adopted by the wearer as his motto and seal. This part of the inscription is found lying in a band across the face

of the tablet, and is easily distinguishable from the rest, of which it is evidently the attestation. After the tablet was completed in the manner described, it was laid away among the archives of the family, just as important papers are filed for preservation. Such inscriptions are abundant in all the ruins of Lower Mesopotamia; and there is little doubt that the deciphering of these mute plates of antiquity—a work as yet only begun—is destined to cast much light on some of the vexed problems of ancient history.

In addition to what they printed on clay and preserved by burning, the Chaldeans were skillful in gem engraving. Their work of this kind was sometimes highly artistic, comparing favorably with that done by the modern lapidary. The signets and seals already described belong to this kind of art, and the inscriptions on some of the cylinders are of such an archaic type as to prove conclusively that the art was successfully practiced from the earliest times of the Empire. Several of the seals belonging to the elder Chaldean monarchs have been deciphered and translated into English. Of this description is the seal of Uruk, mentioned in a former chapter. The inscription is: "The signet of Uruk, the pious chief, king of Ur, high-priest of Niffer." Reference has also been made to the seal of Ilgi, on which the legend is as follows: "To the manifestation of Nergal, king of Bit-Zida, of Zurgulla, for the saving of the life of Ilgi, the powerful hero, the king of Ur, son of Uruk. . . . May his name be preserved." A cylinder belonging to one of the Sin Dynasty has the following inscription: "Sin, the powerful chief, the king of Ur, the king of the four races. . . . his seal." Some of the cylinders are plain, having neither figures nor inscriptions on their surfaces. Others have figures and emblems, but no legend. Considerable variety is shown in the designs presented on the signets, and no inconsiderable degree of artistic skill exhibited in their execution. Enough remains to establish the fact that the gem-cutters of Chaldaea were professional workmen and devotees of their art.

## CHAPTER X.—RELIGION.



THE religious system of the Chaldeans began with a theory of the creation of the world. This theory, as it was received and taught by the priests of Babylon, has been preserved in the fragment of Berosus already referred to,<sup>1</sup> and is as follows:

"Once all was darkness and water. In this chaos lived horrid animals, and men with two wings, and others with four wings and two faces, and others again with double organs, male and female. Some had the thighs of goats, and horns on their heads; others had horses' feet, or were formed behind like a horse and in front like a man. There were bulls with human heads, and horses and men with the heads of dogs, and other animals of human shape with fins like fishes, and fishes like sirens, and dragons, and creeping things, and serpents, and wild creatures, the images of which are to be found in the temple of Bel.

"Over all these ruled a woman of the name of Omorka. But Bel divided the darkness and clove the woman asunder, and of one part he made the earth, and of the other the sun and moon and planets; and he drew off the water and apportioned it to the land, and prepared and arranged the world. But those creatures could not endure the light of the sun and became extinct.

"When Bel saw the land uninhabited and yet fruitful he smote off his head and bade one of the gods mingle the blood which flowed from his head with earth, and form therewith men and animals and wild creatures who could support the atmosphere. A great multitude of men of various tribes inhabited Chaldaea, but they lived without any order, like the animals.

"Then there appeared to them from the sea, on the shore of Babylonia, a fearful ani-

mal of the name of OAN. His body was that of a fish, but under the fish's head another head was attached, and on the fins were feet like those of a man, and he had a man's voice. The image of the creature is still preserved. The animal came at morning, and passed the day with men. But he took no nourishment, and at sunset went again into the sea, and there remained for the night. This animal taught men language and science, the harvesting of seeds and fruits, the rules for the boundaries of land, the modes of building cities and temples, arts, and writing, and all that pertains to the civilization of human life."

Such is the story of the genesis of things as told by Berosus. The narrative goes on to recount the genealogy and history of the princes who first reigned in the earth after the creature Oan taught men the arts and sciences. First came Alorus, whom the god himself had called from the shepherd life to be king of Chaldaea. His reign lasted for 36,000 years. After that his son Alaparus ruled for 10,800; Almélon, for 46,800; and Ammenon for 43,200. Then there came another sea-god up from the deep whose name was IDOTIION. He, like Oan, instructed the human race, and then retired as he came. In a subsequent reign, also of fabulous duration, four additional fish-men, having the wisdom of the gods, came from the sea, and were for a season the teachers of mankind; and finally in the reign of Edorankhus another aquatic god, ODAKON, of like fashion with the preceding, came and explained in detail the wonders of the system which Oan had revealed in outline. This was the last of the Chaldean avatars before the flood of Xisuthrus.<sup>1</sup>

The gods of the Chaldeans were sky-gods. Their home was in the open heaven. They

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that the ten primeval rulers of the world—Alorus, Alaparus, Almélon, Ammenon, Amegalarus, Daönus, Edorankhus, Amempsinus, Otiartes, and Xisuthrus—correspond in number at least to the ten antediluvian patriarchs mentioned in the Book of Genesis.

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 112.



were for the most part the deities of stars and planets. Twelve were worshiped as having divine powers of the highest order. The supreme god was EL. After him was named the great capital Bab-El—the Gate of El. He sat enthroned above the other deities in heaven. He was the lord of the sky-land. Austere and stern he was, sitting apart from the other gods and without sympathy for the human race.

In the great flood the anger of El was kindled against all men, even Sisit, whom he wished to destroy with the rest. His titles were “the Warrior,” “the Prince of the gods,” “the Lord of the universe.” In one of the Assyrian tablets he is called “the Lamp of the divinities,” and everywhere he was recognized as dwelling in light and majesty. The worship of El, however, was not so universal or popular as was that of the gods whom the Chaldean imagination more intimately associated with human interests and hopes.

After El the next in rank among the deities of the Chaldeans was the god ANU. He had his abode in the concave dome of the heavens. Hither it was that the other gods, terrified by the devastation of the flood, fled for security from the wrath of El. Anu had many titles. In the Assyrian inscriptions he is generally honored with the epithet *malik*, or king. In other places he is called “the old Anu,” “the original Chief,” “the Sire of gods,” “the Lord of spirits and demons.” On some tablets he is known as “the King of the lower world,” “the Lord of darkness,” “the Ruler of the far-off city,” etc.

The chief seat of Anu's worship was the ancient city of Erech. Here was one of the favorite burying grounds of the Chaldeans, and over this Anu was said to preside as a tutelary deity.<sup>1</sup> His association with this great necropolis of Lower Mesopotamia gave to him something of the character of Pluto among the nations of the West. The worship of Anu was very ancient. Uruk himself

mentions him among the deities worshiped at Ur. Shamas-Vul, the son of Ismi-Dagon, built at Shergal, as early as 1830 B. C., a temple to the honor of this god. The temple of Warka, even after Anu had long ceased to be worshiped at its shrine, still bore the name of Bit-Anu, or House of Anu. Even Beltis, whose worship was substituted for that of Anu in this temple, was known as the Lady of Bit-Anu.

The god BEL is generally known by his Greek name Belus. But the attributes given him by the Greek authors do not harmonize perfectly with those ascribed by the Chaldeans to Bel. By the latter this god was honored with such titles as “the Supreme,” “the Father of the gods,” “the Procreator,” “the Lord of spirits,” etc. There is also some confusion between the offices and titles of Bel and those of the half mythical Nimrod after his deification. It seems that when the great hunter was enrolled among the gods his attributes and epithets were merged with those of Belus, or Bel, so that in later times there was little if any distinction between the deified Nimrod and the god with whose nature he was blended.

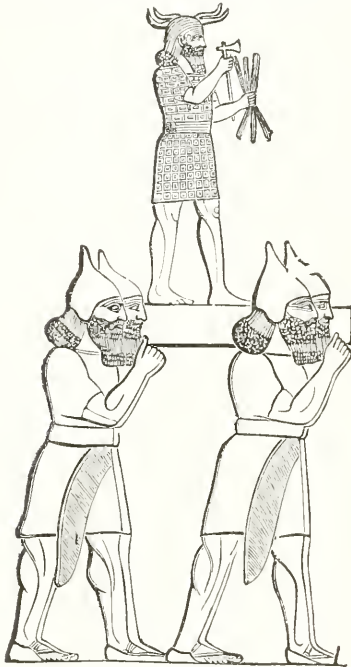
The common epithet of this hero-god was accordingly Bel- or Bil-Nipru, that is, Bel-Nimrod, or “the Hunter Lord.” The chief seat of his worship was Calneh or Nipur, the modern Niffer. To him this city was sacred. Here, no doubt, the great Nimrod reigned in the heroic age of Chaldæa. The city bore his name, and the great and splendid temple was dedicated to his worship. By many traditions he is associated with this old capital of the country.

Besides the local importance of Bel-Nimrod in Calneh, his reputation as a powerful deity extended to other cities and districts. A large temple was erected in his honor by Kurri-Galzu at Akkerkuf, and invocations found on Assyrian tablets, in which he is addressed as “the Lord of the world,” prove that his fame and worship had extended even to the capital of the northern kingdom. Together with Anu and Hea he constituted a trinity of Chaldee gods quite distinguished in power and attributes from the almighty El

<sup>1</sup>The name of the god Anu appears in many forms. Sometimes it is Ana, sometimes Yan or Oan, the name of the fish-god who instructed the Chaldeans in the rudiments of science and art. The name also appears in the Hebrew word Anam-lech and others of like formation.

and the stellar deities who will presently claim attention.

The third divinity in the triad of Chaldaea was HEA. He it was who in the likeness of the fish-monster came up out of the sea to teach the Chaldeans letters and astronomy. To them he made known the ways of life, and though he took upon himself the form of a reptile in which to make his revelation to the first settlers in Lower Mesopotamia, he seems not to have suffered by his abasement. By Berosus he is celebrated as being "the great Giver of good gifts to man." Some-



PROCESSION OF EEL.

times he is called "the Lord of the abyss," and sometimes "Lord of the sea." Like Poseidon of the Greeks, Hea was represented as having dominion over the waters. But more particularly was he worshiped as the giver of life and knowledge. As such his symbol was the serpent, the common emblem among the oriental nations of superhuman wisdom.<sup>1</sup> His

<sup>1</sup> There are strong grounds for connecting the tradition of Hea in the form of a reptile, making men wise as the gods, with that of the serpent in Paradise luring Adam and Eve with the promise of expanded wisdom in eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Some forms of the Chaldean myth are very similar to the story of Eden. (See Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, Vol. I, p. 609.)

connection with the invention of letters is perpetuated in the arrow-head, which, in addition to being one of the primary characters in all the cuneiform inscriptions, is also a symbol of Hea. The cult of Hea was one of the most important and influential elements in the religion of the Chaldeans.

Next came the gods of the planets and stars, the first of whom was the Moon-god SIN. Though placed by Berosus after the god of the sun, in the myths of the Chaldeans themselves the moon-deity has the preëminence over his more luminous rival. Perhaps there is in this fact a hint that the early race of men who gathered into a permanent society at Ur of the Chaldees found pleasure and profit rather in the calm meditations of the eventide and the stillness of the night than in the splendors of the day. There is no doubt that the climate of Lower Mesopotamia was specially favorable to the development of evening reveries; and it is not difficult to conceive how, in the cool of the twilight, while the crescent moon hung her silver arc of beauty in the western sky, the busy imagination and reverent heart of the Chaldean sage as he sat by the door of his tent could attribute the first of divine powers to the orb of night.

By the earlier Chaldeans the Moon-god was called HURKI, from the same root as the word Ur, the chief seat of his worship. This name signifies *to watch*, and the epithet was no doubt bestowed in allusion to the vigils of those who by night watched their flocks or dreamed of the infinite, under the stars. The principal titles of Sin were "the Powerful," "the Lord of the spirits," and "the King of gods." In reference to his heavenly symbol, he was called "the Bright" or "the Shining." On the monuments he sits as a venerable bearded figure, and near his head are pictured the various phases of the crescent moon.<sup>1</sup> On the signet-cylinder of King Uruk the Moon-god is so drawn. He sits with one

<sup>1</sup> It is a striking peculiarity of the drawings of the crescent moon, as they appear on the Babylonian monuments, that the semilune is always set with the bow towards the horizon—a position which in the latitude of Chaldaea could rarely happen in nature.



hand outstretched as if in salutation, and three worshipers standing before him do obeisance. This deity was the special favorite of the Chaldean kings. To him, as already noted, the great Uruk and his distinguished son Ilgi built and dedicated the ancient temple of Ur. His worship was also popular with the princes of Borsippa and Babylon. One dynasty of Chaldean sovereigns were in honor of this deity designated as the Sin kings. During the long period of Assyrian domination the Moon-god held his place in the esteem of the people, and as late as the times of Nebuchadnezzar his worship was perpetuated with the greatest ardor and formality.

Next to Sin among the deities of the luminaries of heaven was SAMAS, god of the sun.<sup>1</sup> His symbol was the circle. He was represented as illuminating heaven and earth, and was celebrated as lord of the daylight. But more generally his titles were not directly referable to the power and splendor of the sun. He was known as "the Ruler of all things," "the Establisher of the firmament," and "the Vanquisher of the king's enemies." In warlike expeditions Samas went forth with the army. He put the foe to flight. He triumphed over opposition. He extended the royal dominion and upheld the king's arm in battle. Just as the sun warms and invigorates universal nature, so Samas in the minds and hearts of men cheered with light and warmed with inspiration.

The cities of Larsa and Sippara were the principal seats of the Sun-god's worship. At the former place was the great temple reputed to have been built by Uruk and restored from time to time by the Chaldean kings down to the times of Nebuchadnezzar. In the latter city the worship of Samas prevailed over all other forms of religion, inasmuch that Sippara became known to the Greeks under the name of Heliopolis, or City of the Sun. The idolatry of Adrammelech, the fire-god, told of in the Second Book of Kings as having been introduced into Samaria from the

East, was but a transplanted form of the worship of the Chaldean Samas. The high and universal respect in which this deity was held by the princes and kings is indicated in the fact that very few of the royal signet-cylinders are without the symbol of the sun among their emblems of divinity.

High in rank among the deities of Chaldeæ, though perhaps not greatly esteemed in the times of the founding of the Empire, was the storm-god BIN.<sup>1</sup> He wielded the power of the air, and was therefore allied in his offices to the classical Zeus. In the system of the Chaldeans, however, Bin most nearly corresponds to the Uranus of Greek mythology. He was the wielder of the thunder-bolt, the director of the storm and tempest. He it was who in the Chaldean account of the deluge is represented as thundering in the midst of heaven. He was regarded as the destroyer of the harvest. His emblem, found upon the tablets and cylinders, is a kind of flambeau representing lightning. His character was that of a destructive agent in nature, and yet as the rain-god he was celebrated as the giver of fertility and the master of the fecundity of the earth. The rivers and canals and aqueducts were regarded as under his watch-care, and the public works by which civilization is fostered were protected by his favor.

The first of the fire-spirits of the planets was ADAR, the lord of Saturn. To him were given also the Semitic names of Bar and Nin. In character, however, the god Adar is more nearly allied to the classical Hercules than to Uranus. He was worshiped as the god of strength and courage and the lord of the brave. His face was against the enemy in battle, and the heart of the warrior was strengthened in the conflict by calling on the name of Adar. He was "the Reducer of the disobedient," "the Exterminator of rebels." Like Bel-Nimrod he trampled down the foe. Like the Roman Mars he led the king's armies to victory.

By a strange mingling of attributes, Adar is sometimes confounded with that fish-god,

<sup>1</sup>The name is variously written: Samas, Shamas, Shemsi, Sansi, San, etc. The English word *sun* is no doubt originally derived from the same root.

<sup>1</sup>This name is also variously written. Sometimes it is Iva, and more frequently Vul; but Bin seems to be indicated as the true form.

Oan, who taught the Chaldeans the beginnings of art and science. In this capacity he is represented in the reliefs as part man and part fish, and underneath is written such titles



IMAGE OF THE FISH-GOD.

as "God of the sea" and "the Dweller in the depths." By another change of epithets he is lifted again to his own place in the skies, and adored as "the Chief of spirits" and "the Favorite of the gods." Further

on, in the myths of Assyria, Adar, as the impersonation of strength and power, takes the character of the Man-bull, and as such stands guard in the sculptured courts of palaces.

Like the worship of Bin, that of Adar seems not to date from the earliest, but rather the later, times of the Lower Empire. The oldest of his temples were those of Calah, which rank among the more important ruins of Chaldæa. The later temple at Nineveh had so great a reputation for magnificence that the fame thereof was carried to the Western nations to be celebrated by Tacitus. The emblem of Adar is generally the fish, and the popularity of the deity and of his worship is indicated in the wide distribution of his emblem among the inscriptions.

The Jove of the Chaldeans was called MERODACH. His leading title, somewhat grotesque withal, is "the Old Man of the gods." His worship was a part of the earlier religious system, and gradually rose to preponderance, especially in the times of the Assyrian supremacy. Merodach was the god of the judgment—the patron of justice and right. In his worship there was a larger element of morality than in that of most other Eastern deities.<sup>1</sup> In all those lands where justice was administered by kings sitting in the gates, Merodach was regarded as presiding and watching over the right. In a philosophical way he was known as "King of the earth," "the most Ancient," and "the Senior of the gods." From the high character and spiritual nature which he bore, he was less frequently

represented by material emblems than was any other of the great deities of Chaldæa. Nor is it certain that any figure in Chaldean art is now extant which was intended to give the artistic concept of this divinity.<sup>1</sup> In the inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar II., Merodach, under the title of Belrabu, is celebrated as superior to all the deities of heaven and earth.

To the planet Mars was assigned the war-god NERGAL, whose titles are "the King of battles" and "Champion of the gods." The principal seats of his worship were the ancient cities of Kutha and Tarbissa. In the Assyrian account of the flood Nergal is referred to as the destroyer; but his chief fame was based on his power over the chase and the battle-field. In this his attributes are mingled with those of Bel-Nimrod, to whom he is also likened in the worship given him as the ancestor of the Assyrian kings. The symbol of Nergal is the celebrated Man-lion, which stands with outspread wings at the portals of the great temples and the palace gates of Susa and Nineveh. There is thus established an intimate association between the War-god and Adar, whose effigy, the winged bull, stands also as the guardian to the entrances of palaces and temples.

The Chaldean Venus was called BILIT—a name which is given in Herodotus as Mylitta. The name means "the Lady," but the more august title of the goddess is "the Queen-mother of the gods." Sometimes she is called "the Lady of Offspring;" and it appears that the Babylonians gave her a preëminent rank as the goddess of fertility and birth. At Babylon a splendid temple was built in her honor. Within the court was a grove, under whose cool shade a fountain of water symbolized the divinity. To her the cooing dove was sacred, and the sportive fish, whose fecundity peoples the waters. The shrine of the goddess was in the grove, near the fountain, and hither came bands of pilgrims to worship.

According to the custom of the time the maidens of Babylon were once in their lives

<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew name of Jupiter is Sedek, meaning *Justice*.

<sup>1</sup> Among the sculptures of Babylon, a figure of a god walking is supposed to be an attempt to represent Merodach.



obliged to offer themselves at this shrine. At a certain season they came in companies, and sat in long rows with chaplets of cords on their heads, waiting to be chosen. With the rest came the daughters of princes, in covered cars, and with numerous attendants. Each maiden was obliged to remain until some one of the pilgrims cast into her lap a coin of gold. Then she must arise and follow him. The coin she afterwards gave to the treasury of the goddess, and was thenceforth freed from her obligation.<sup>1</sup> In all parts of Lower Mesopotamia the worship of Mylitta was popular, and the richness of her temples attested the faith of the Chaldeans in her whom they regarded as the giver of beauty and the author of love.

Opposed to this goddess, who presided over the birth of all things tender and beautiful, was *ISTAR*, the goddess of war and ruin. In her attributes she is allied to the *Artemis* of Greek mythology. In her relation to Mylitta we see unmistakable traces of that Eastern imagination which, in constructing its systems of theology, has shown so marked a disposition to arrange the deities in pairs—good against evil, light against darkness, blessing and fruit against death and ruin. By this strange opposition of attributes the planet *Venus* was assigned to Istar as well as to Mylitta, so that from this source both love and destruction were said to emanate. The double aspect of *Venus* as morning and evening star had caught the attention of the Chaldeans; and just as the Western nations gave one name—*Phosphor* or *Lucifer*—to the star of morning, and another—*Hesperus*—to the star of evening, so the astrologers of the Chaldean plains assigned two goddesses, the one of love and blessing, the other of ruin and death, to the conspicuous planet of the morning and evening skies.

In the myths of Istar there is a great similarity to the stories of *Proserpina* as recited

<sup>1</sup>The stoical *Herodotus*, in continuing the account of the choosing of the maidens, adds: "The good-looking and graceful maidens quickly find a pilgrim; but the ugly ones can not satisfy the law, and often remain in the temple for three or four years." In the apocryphal *Book of Baruch* the same ceremony is described.

in the poems of the Latin race. The coming of *Life* in the spring, and her disappearance in winter, is commemorated in the narrative of *Istar's* journey to the nether world. She went down to the house of *Irkolla*, which has no exit. *Istar* said: "Watchman of the waters, open thy gate, that I may enter. If thou openest not, I will break thy gate and burst asunder thy bars; I will shatter the threshold and destroy the doors." The myth recites that the door was opened by the watchman, and as *Istar* passed into the lower world he took the crown from her head. At the successive portals through which she passed she was stripped of all her ornaments, until beyond the seventh gate she was delivered to *Ninkigal*, the spirit of the depths, by whom *Istar* was grievously afflicted.

Meanwhile the world above lamented the loss of *Istar* until what time *Hea* sent word to *Ninkigal* to release her. Then was she bathed in the water of life; the seven portals were opened, and *Istar* came back to earth: a myth of the return of spring.

The representative of the planet *Mercury* among the Chaldeans was the god *NEBO*. His name is derived from the word *nibbah*, which in the Semitic dialects signifies to prophesy. *Nebo* was the god of forethought and intelligence. He presided over knowledge and learning. He was said to hear from afar off, and to teach and instruct mankind. In his attributes he resembled *Hermes* of the Greeks, though the character of *Nebo* was more exalted and less treacherous than that of the somewhat whimsical deity of the West. He was called "the Supporter," "the Ever-



IMAGE OF NEBO.

ready," "the Lord of the constellations." Notwithstanding the latter high-sounding title it does not appear that Nebo was a deity of the first rank in greatness.

Sometimes the name of Nebo is omitted from lists of the gods, or again it is set among the minor rather than the major divinities of Chaldea. It is doubtful whether Nebo was worshiped from the earliest times, but it is certain that he is to be classified with the deities of Lower Mesopotamia, rather than with those of Assyria. The chief seat of his worship was Borsippa, and it was to him that the



NANA, THE PHOENICIAN ASTARTE.

great temple of world-wide fame, known as the Birs-Nimrud, was dedicated. At Calah, on the Tigris, the ruins of one of his shrines are found, and it is from this place that the striking statues of the god were taken and transferred to the British Museum.

The catalogue of planetary gods ends with Nebo.

With each god, according to the system of the Chaldeans, was associated a goddess, who shared with her husband the rule of his sphere. Hea, the Chaldean Neptune, had DAV-KINA for his queen, and her titles are the same as his. The wife of Bel-Nimrod was BELTIS, who had the highest fame, being honored with such preëminent titles as "the Great Goddess," and "Mother of the deities." Her rank in the pantheon of Chaldaea was almost as high as that of Juno among the Romans, and besides this exaltation she had also many of the attributes of Ceres and Diana. The queen of El was called ANATA, but her personality is scarcely distinguishable from his, and her titles are but a reflection from her husband's. In like manner was associated with Samas in authority his wife, the goddess ANUNIT, who was worshiped at Larsa

and Sippara. The queen of Merodach was ZIR-BANIT, who had a temple at Babylon, and who divides with Beltis the honor and rank of the Juno of the Chaldeans. With Nergal was associated the goddess NANA, who appears to have been the divinity whom the Phœnicians worshiped as Astarte; while to Nebo was assigned the goddess VARAMIT, who was honored with the title of "the Exalted one"

It was thus that in their aspirations for communion with the higher powers, the yearnings of the ancient Chaldeans turned upwards to the planets and stars. The horizon of the Babylonian plain was uniform and boundless. It was the heaven above rather than the earth beneath, which exhibited variety and life. The Zodiac was ever new with its brilliant evolutions. Through the clear atmosphere the tracks of the shining orbs could be traced in every phase and transposition. With each dawn of the morning light, with each recurrence of the evening twilight, a new panorama spread before the reverent imagination of the dreamer, and he saw in the moving spheres not only the abode but the manifested glory of his gods. Between the rising and the setting of the sun and the moon and the stars and the movements and vicissitudes of human life—the waking and sleeping, the vigor and weariness of men—there seemed to be a constant relation. The one appeared to depend on the other. The affairs of life seemed to receive their laws and conditions from the skies. The antecedents of good and evil were in the stars. Merodach was the author of good; Adar, the breeder of malevolence.

In the Zodiac the sun had twelve houses. His proper home was in the sign of Leo. So likewise the planets passed through twelve stages in their journey, and each sign or "house" through which an orb thus passed became a seat of divine power, and the planets themselves were gods. With these, thirty of the fixed stars were associated as "counseling gods;" while twelve others in the northern sky and twelve in the south, were called "the judges." As many of these twenty-four luminaries as were above the horizon decided the fortunes of the living, while those below the limit of night decided the fates of the dead.



Each month of the year belonged to one of the twelve major gods, beginning with Anu. The seven days of the week were governed by the sun, moon, and five planets; and the hours of the day were apportioned to controlling luminaries.

In all this we find one of the earliest and most striking examples of the primitive unity of religion, poetry, and science. In the first ages of history the offices of the priest, the bard, and the philosopher were hardly to be distinguished the one from the other. Each had his own subjective concept of nature, and each expressed what was most strongly impressed upon his own thought. Doubtless the man of antiquity, more than the man of modern times, was *alive* to the varying aspects of the natural world. Doubtless he was thus predisposed to consider Nature, and to speak of her laws, her origin, her destiny. But each thinker responded in his own way, and gave his own interpretation as he was moved by the *anima mundi*. He uttered a prophecy, chanted a poem, or explained in prose the nature, the origin, the reason of the world, as he was moved thereto by the varying moods of his mind.

The primitive priest, as he gazed on the passing panorama of earth and heaven, caught at the idea of *intelligent causes* behind the tangible forms and processes of nature. To him the important question seemed to be *who it was* that controlled and directed the movements of the world and led onward the magnificent marches of the skies. In that part of nature which lay nearest to himself he perceived no motion or agitation which was not traceable to some intelligent agency. From this he reasoned by analogy that the greater processes of the natural world were in like manner produced by a personal will and power—that is, by a god. This idea has always seemed to men of one type of mind to be the most important thought of which mankind are capable; and deducible from this assumption, the priests of old reasoned that the most important duties of man related to a knowledge and worship of the gods, who were the causes of all things.

The poet takes another view of the same

problem. It is to his *senses* rather than to his reasoning powers that Nature makes her strongest appeal. He feels what he sees. He enjoys; he suffers. Upon his sensitive nature falls the shadow of the cloud, and his thought at once changes to somber melancholy, to doubt, to gloomy forebodings. The cloud breaks away, and his spirit becomes radiant as the light. He gathers the sunbeams in his arms. He turns his face upward to the blue pavilion, and pours forth his ecstatic dream in a rhapsody of the skies. But he speaks only of what he sees and feels. His gratified senses are the sources of his song.

The sage looks at nature, not in her effects upon his senses and imagination, not in respect to the forces which lie behind her visible forms, but in *the relations of her parts*. By him every phenomenon is attributed to some other, and that to some other still. To him each fact is itself the cause of the fact which succeeds it. All things are related and dependent, and the highest knowledge is to understand the laws of these relations and dependencies. By such knowledge man may be able to control the conditions under which he exists, and to augment his happiness by an alliance with Nature rather than by the worship of the gods.

In all times the leading minds of the world have busied themselves with one or the other of these interpretations of Nature. In the primitive ages, however, when thought and feeling and emotion—sensibility, will, and passion—were still commingled in the glowing minds of men, it generally happened that the priest was in part a prophet. The sage was in some sense a philosopher; and the seer in his higher and nobler moods broke forth into song.

Of such sort were the Wise Men of Chaldæa. The interpretation of nature through the mingled oracles of priest and bard and prophet was the ground-work of that half-mythical and half-scientific lore which, at the first Chaldæan, became disseminated throughout Western Asia. To trace the paths of the stars through the sky, to note the approximation and divergence of the planets, and to estimate the influence of this ever-changing aspect on the affairs of

men,—such was the work of the priests. To show how the prosperity and reverses of the Empire depended upon conjunctions and oppositions in the skies, was a duty which has made the name Chaldean synonymous in all ages with seer and prophet. In the Book of Daniel the Chaldeans are spoken of as the interpreters of stars and signs, and the same reputation is diffused in the literature of all nations. Until to-day, in the high light of civilization, the idea of *some* kind of domination of the stars over the affairs of human life has hardly released its hold on the minds of men; and the language of the old Chaldean ritual of signs<sup>1</sup> has still a familiar sound in the ears of the credulous.

<sup>1</sup> The following application of star-lore to the affairs of life has been deciphered from a tablet discovered at Nineveh: "If Jupiter is seen in the month of Tammuz, there will be corpses. If Venus comes opposite the star of the fish, there will be devastation. If the star of the great lion is gloomy, the heart of the people will not rejoice. If the moon is seen on the first day of the month, Accad will prosper."

The intellectual grandeur of the Chaldeans ended with the Assyrian ascendancy. The sages and dreamers of the South shrank back before the brandishing sword of the North. But the nobler part of Chaldea, as of every nation and kindred, could not perish. The mighty works which were accomplished by the race of men who brought Lower Mesopotamia into the civilized condition are hardly any longer to be distinguished from the dust of the plain; but that beautiful astrological idolatry, of which they were the authors, has entered into the dreams and poems of all lands, and has pierced with its tender light even the gloom and melancholy of Byron:

"Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!

If in your bright leaves we would read the fate

Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven

That in our aspirations to be great

Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,  
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are

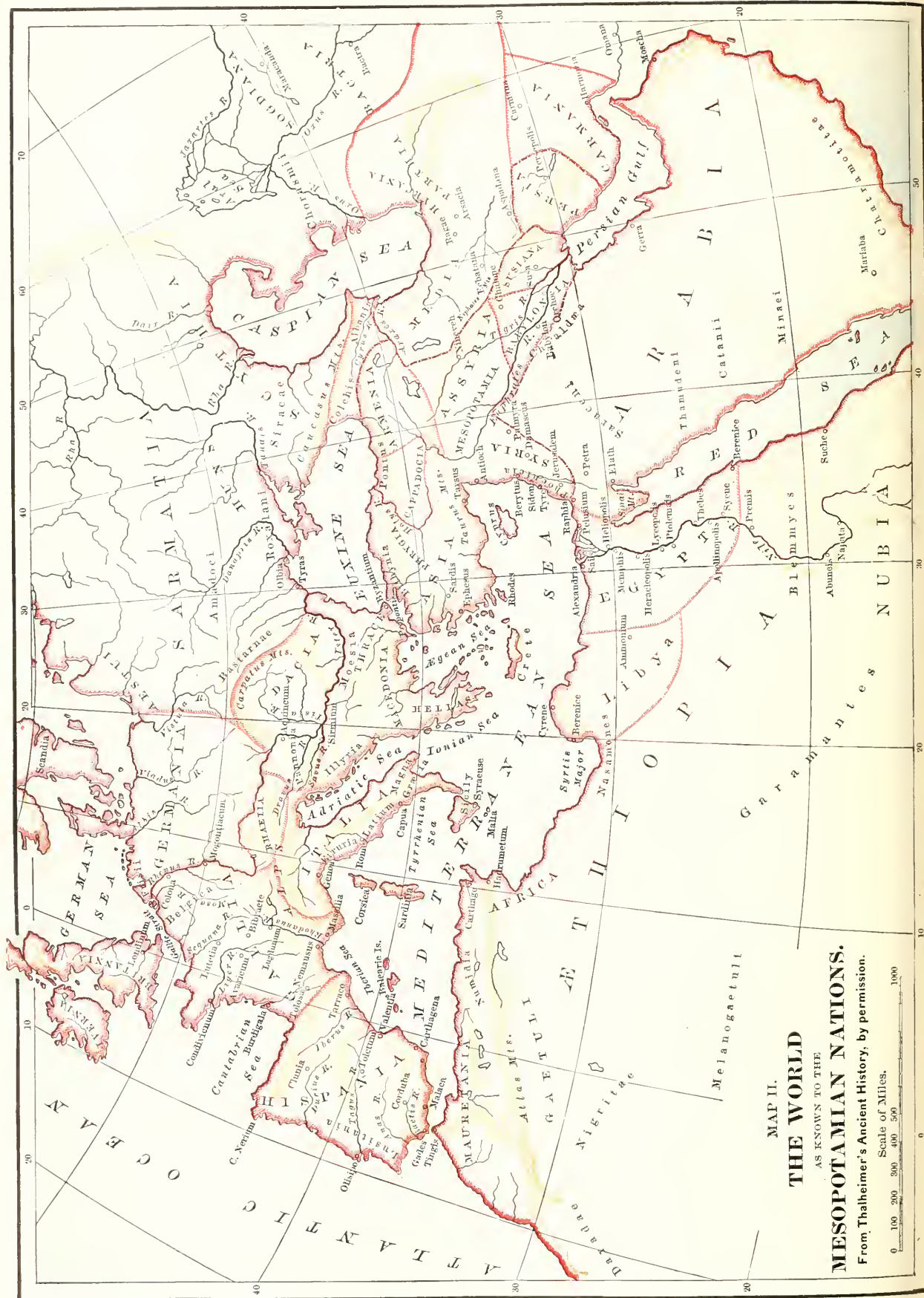
A beauty and a mystery, and create

In us such love and reverence from afar,

That fortune, fame, power, life have named  
themselves a star." —*Childe Harold*.

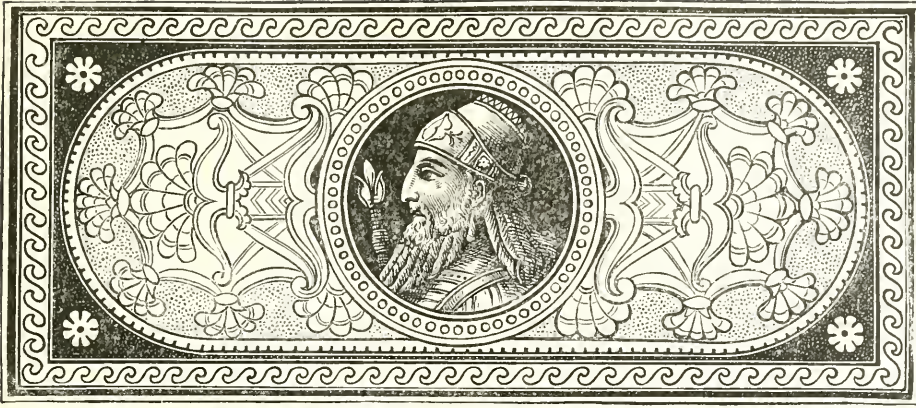






MAP II.  
THE WORLD  
AS KNOWN TO THE  
MESOPOTAMIAN NATIONS.  
From Thalheimer's Ancient History, by permission.  
Scale of Miles.  
0 100 200 300 400 500





## Book Third.

# ASSYRIA.

## CHAPTER XI.—COUNTRY AND PRODUCTS.



OF the general character of the country called ASSYRIA something has already been said. In the description of Chaldæa a sketch was also given of the more important region on the north. Upper Mesopotamia is strongly discriminated from the low-lying Babylonian plain. The latter is an alluvium which in the course of ages has been created by the action of the rivers; the former is an upland district, swelling into plateaus, rising into hills and ridges. The natural limits of the country are in some parts indistinct, and the political boundaries of the Assyrian Empire were at different epochs fluctuating and uncertain.

The chief seat of imperial power in Assyria lay on the Tigris, between the thirty-fifth and thirty-seventh parallels of north latitude. This region may be regarded as the geographical and political center of that vast dominion which for several centuries held the ascendancy in Western Asia. The territory, however, which may be properly included un-

der the name Assyria had a much wider limit than the two degrees of latitude which included its vital part.

The ancient historians—Herodotus, Pliny, Strabo—give no satisfactory account of the boundaries of the country. The first considered Chaldæa to be but a district of Assyria; the second made Assyria and Mesopotamia identical; while the third included Kurdistan on the east and Syria on the west under the common name.

If in order to discover the true limits of the country we turn to nature, we shall find on the east the well-defined barrier of the Zagros mountain range. This chain, which in the upper course of the Tigris presses moderately close to the river, makes a detour eastward, including the ancient provinces of Adiabene and Chalonitis, and constituting in that direction the natural boundary of the country. On the south, also, the limit of Assyria is plainly indicated in the descent from the upland to the alluvium—a line already defined as extending from Is to Samarah. On the Mesopotamian side of the Tigris the determination of a boundary is more dif-

fiicult; but the best view, whether geographical or historical, is that which makes the western and south-western boundary of Assyria to be the Euphrates. On the north, that branch of the Armenian mountains known as the Mons Masius may be properly taken as the natural limit of the country. Within all this extensive area, and even beyond its borders, unmistakable traces of the great Assyrian race are to be found; and if the provinces and kingdoms conquered by this people were to be included, the boundaries would have to be greatly extended in all directions.

The maximum length of Assyria, measured diagonally from north-west to south-east, was about three hundred and fifty miles; the greatest breadth, three hundred miles. But the average length and breadth of the country were not nearly so great. The whole area of the region included in the irregular boundaries above given was not less than seventy-five thousand square miles—a district equal to the State of Nebraska, and not much below the area of Great Britain.

During the period of her ascendancy, Assyria surpassed in territorial extent any of the nations with which she came in contact.<sup>1</sup> The great breadth of the Assyrian dominions, no less than the fortunate geographical position of Mesopotamia and the vigor of the race, contributed to the power and perpetuity of the Empire.

Assyria is divided by the Tigris into an eastern and a western part. The former stretches from the river across the plains and up the slopes of the Zagros; the latter, lying west of the Tigris, looks to the Mesopotamian uplands and is bordered afar by the Euphrates. The eastern region is amply supplied with water. A thousand springs and rivulets bursting from the mountain sides gather and rush along, combining as they near the Tigris into rapid streams and swelling rivers. On the north, also, the region is copiously watered;

for the high ranges of Armenia send down to the plains a perennial supply. The central and southern region is less favored. The rivers of Mesopotamia, on the side of the Tigris, are neither numerous nor abundant in water. On the side of the Euphrates a few important tributaries are found at intervals, but all the south-western district between the thirty-sixth parallel and the northern limit of Chaldaea is an arid and unfruitful country, with many of the features of the Arabian waste.

Taken all in all, the upland region rising into hills and ridges between the Euphrates and the Tigris could not be truthfully described as fertile or as possessing any great incentives to civilization. Only in that central part, stretching in all directions from the site of Nineveh, were the fruitfulness of the soil, the salubrity of the atmosphere, and the general aspects of nature, of such sort as to react powerfully upon the faculties of man.

EASTERN ASSYRIA, that is, the part between the Tigris and the foot of the Zagros, is a country half hilly and half alluvial in its character. Ranges of hills, parallel with each other, and at right angles with the mountains, divide the district into a succession of valleys, broadening into that of the Tigris, fertile and highly favored. From the great river to the mountain foot is about one hundred and forty miles. The maximum breadth is attained above the thirty-fifth parallel, and from this latitude southward East Assyria narrows gradually to a point at the junction of the Gyndes with the Tigris, a short distance below Baghdad. In the river-beds the streams lie low, filling their banks only in the seasons of rain. The hills and ridges are built of limestone, and their upper slopes are covered with stunted brushwood and dwarf oaks.

Beginning above the thirty-seventh parallel and on the east bank of the Tigris, the rivers of Assyria are, first, the Kurnib, a mountain stream of rapid flow and considerable volume. The next, and greatest, is the Zab Ala, or Greater Zab, which flows with broad and steady current through the district of the most important Assyrian ruins—the region about Nineveh and Calah—and enters the

<sup>1</sup> The great kingdoms and empires of antiquity are dwarfed by territorial comparison with the nations of modern times. But by the aggregation of many populous cities within a narrow district, a degree of compactness and political concentration was obtained which is hardly surpassed in the more diffuse civilizations of the present.

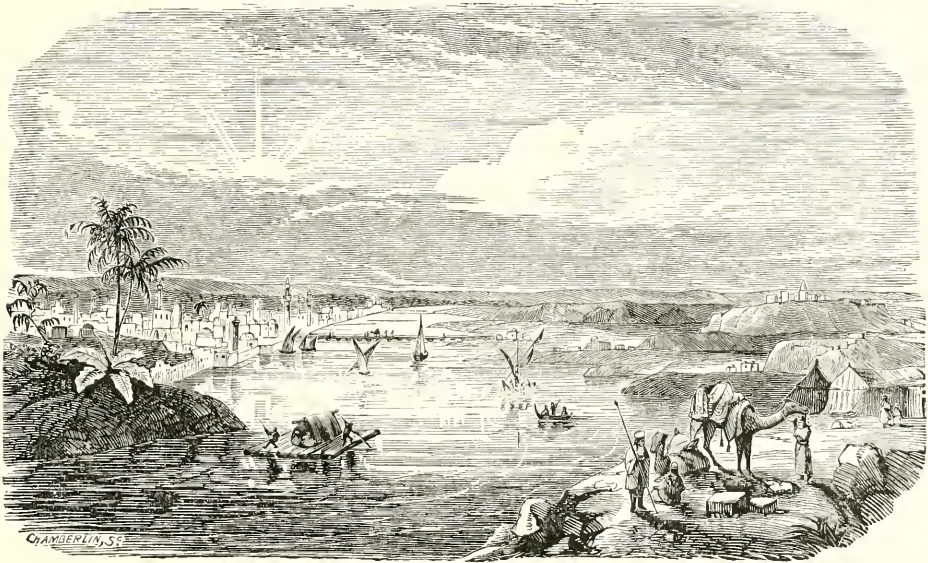


Tigris, after a course of three hundred and fifty miles, in latitude  $36^{\circ}$  N. The Zab Asfal, or Lesser Zab, drains the ancient province of Adiabene, and the Adhem gathers its waters from the brooks of Chalonitis and falls into the main river about the thirty-fourth parallel. Last of the principal streams of Eastern Assyria is the Diyaleh, the classical Gyndes, which forms the south-western boundary of the country from the mountains of Kurdistan to the Tigris at Baghdad.

On the Mesopotamian bank, that is, in WESTERN ASSYRIA, the streams are neither many nor abundant. The tributaries of the

featureless, region, well-nigh as level and devoid of charm as is the waste of Arabia. Nevertheless, the surface of this district, like the American plains, rises and falls; and the country is far from being a sea-level flat like the alluvial region of Lower Mesopotamia. The streams of this district are few, and sink into the niter-sprinkled soil. Rains are rare and scanty, and the water which pours from occasional springs is frequently brackish and unfit for use.

Westward from the Khabur are the hills of Abdul-Aziz, an upheaved region covered with fragments of basalt, and presenting here



THE TIGRIS AT NINEVEH.

Tigris on this side are mere creeks, but a few miles in length, and generally dry for the greater part of the year. Far to the north, however, in the district of Mons Masius, the streams are perennial, and the country, though half-mountainous, is plentifully supplied with springs and brooks. Into the Euphrates, from the side of Mesopotamia, fall only the two rivers, the Belik or Belichus, which drains the ancient Padan-Aram, and the Khabur, which waters a considerable region between the thirty-fifth parallel and the mountainous country of Mygdonia.

The traveler, as he stands on the undulating plateau lying south of Mons Masius, sees around him a somewhat elevated, but almost

and there the cones of extinct volcanoes. This part of Mesopotamia is favored with one small lake—the Khatouniyeh—oblong in shape, with low and sedgy banks, abounding in water-fowl and fish.

Western Assyria is divided into a northern and a southern slope by a range of hills called the Sinjar. This elevation stretches midway across the country from the Khabur to the Tigris below Nineveh, and constitutes the principal water-shed of Mesopotamia. The range is an upheaval of shaly limestone, fossiliferous in character, and in some parts mountainous in magnitude. Down the broken sides of this great ridge many springs pour their feeble contribution of water, but the

resulting streams are small and soon sink into the plains.

The slopes of the Sinjar are sufficiently fertile to produce fine orchards and fields of grain. The native forests are of considerable importance and extend even to the summit of the range. The country west of Nineveh is a well-wooded region, and the slopes of the hills descending to the river are in many places picturesque and beautiful.

To the south of the Sinjar range lies the flat, unbroken plain which Xenophon declares to be "a country as level as the sea, and full of wormwood;" adding that, "if any other shrub or reed grew there it had a sweet, aromatic smell, but there was not a tree in the whole region." Only one river of any consequence waters the country between the ridges of Sinjar and the northern limit of Chaldaea. This is the Tharthar, which flows in a direction parallel to that of the Tigris, and drops into a salt lake in  $34^{\circ} 30' N$ .

Such are the natural features of Assyria. It does not appear that, to any considerable extent, the physical outlines of the country were used as the basis of political divisions. In the earlier development of a consolidated empire, such as the Assyrian monarchy, little importance is attached to provincial boundaries. The Assyrians did not themselves cultivate geography as zealously as did the Western nations; and we are accordingly dependent upon Greek travelers for most of what is known concerning the political divisions of Mesopotamia and the adjacent regions. It is from the geographers Strabo, Dionysius, and Ptolemy, that our information on this subject is chiefly derived. The writers of the Old Testament have also given us some valuable data respecting the names and positions of the Assyrian provinces. The knowledge derived from this source, combined with that which is gleaned from the classical geographers, furnishes a fair degree of certainty concerning the main outlines of the political districts of Assyria.

The central province—that which included Nineveh—was called *ATURIA*, which is merely the Persian spelling of the word Assyria. This district lying chiefly, but not wholly, on

the east bank of the Tigris, stretches from the Greater Zab northward to above the thirty-seventh parallel of latitude, including within its limits the sites of the great central cities of the Empire. Between the Greater and the Lesser Zab lies the province of *ADIABENE*, in which are the ruins of Arbela. Still further south, between the Lesser Zab and the Gyndes, are the two provinces of *CHALONITIS* and *APOLLONIATIS*, the latter lying along the Tigris, and the former extending eastward to the mountains of Kurdistan. Such are the principal divisions of Eastern Assyria.

In Mesopotamia Proper, several provinces are mentioned by Strabo—*ACABENE*, *TINGENE*, *ANCOBARITIS*—the position and boundaries of which have not been determined. Far to the north, at the base of the Mons Masius, is the great district called by the Greeks *MYGDONIA*.<sup>1</sup> It lies to the north of the Sinjar mountains, and is drained by the tributaries of the Khabur. To the west of this, in the upper bend of the Euphrates, is the district called *PADAN-ARAM*—an ancient name occurring in Genesis, but not mentioned by Strabo or Ptolemy.

The limits of the provincial districts of the Assyrian Empire were, like the boundaries of the Empire itself, somewhat shifting and unsettled. There is no doubt, however, that the provinces of what may be properly called Assyria were as numerous and extensive as here described. In every part of these wide regions, with the exception of the arid plain about the intersection of the thirty-fifth degree of latitude with the forty-second meridian, fragments and ruins of Assyrian greatness are plentifully scattered. The supposition that the Empire was limited to the east bank of the Tigris has no foundation in fact. Three out of the four capital cities were built on that side of the river; but in Western Aturia, also in Adiabene and Apolloniatis, in Mygdonia and on the lower Khabur, the remains of cities and palaces indicate unmistakably the presence of imperial power and grandeur.

Assyria was fortified by nature. Along the eastern frontier lay the ramparts of the

<sup>1</sup>In the writings of Ptolemy this province is called *Gauzanitis*—the same as the *Gozan* mentioned in Second Kings.



Zagros—a succession of mountainous ridges, rising grandly ten thousand feet into summits clad in snow. As the Alps to Italy, so stood these lofty battlements to the fruitful lowlands and plains of Mesopotamia. The few gateways in the fastnesses of the Zagros are almost impassable even in summer, and the warlike races who dwelt beyond were quite shut out from foray and incursion.

On the north the Assyrian plateau was equally defended. Here the mountains of Armenia form an insurmountable bulwark. The summits are perpetually snow-capped, and the deep gorges are impassable. This great range stands nearly at right-angles to the Zagros, and rises abruptly from the plain, of which it is the natural rampart. Military operations in such a region are impossible, and in this fact are found the natural conditions of that warlike independence immemorially enjoyed by the native tribes of Armenia. Like the Swiss among the Alps, the fierce mountaineers who overlooked Assyria from the north smiled at military menace and scorned the subjection of the peoples of the plain.

On the west and south-west Assyria is skirted by the wastes of Syria and Arabia. Beyond the Euphrates westward, and above the thirty-sixth parallel of latitude, lies the rocky desert of the Hittites, with its capital Carchemish; while to the south stretch away the illimitable sands of Arabia. The obstacles to invasion from this direction were few and inconsiderable, but the paucity of the population which could be sustained on the blackened hills of Syria and the scorched sanddunes of Arabia was a barrier quite as effectual as the ridges and snows of the Zagros and the Armenian highlands.

The southern border of the Empire was by nature the weakest. On the side of Chaldaea the country lay open to hostile demonstrations; nor can it be doubted that the relations, both warlike and pacific, of the Assyrians and Chaldeans are to be traced in large measure to the feeble demarkation drawn by nature between the two countries. To create and maintain the line which was naturally wanting the peoples of Upper and Lower Mesopota-

mia resorted to dykes and canals; but these, even when grand in extent and construction, could furnish but a poor substitute for those immense and imperishable bulwarks of stone—the mountains.

The climate of Assyria was as varied as her physical outline. The degree of elevation, the character of the soil, the latitude, the proximity of mountain, river, or desert—all contributed to give variety to atmospheric phenomena, and variability to the aspects of nature. For convenience of discussion the whole of Assyria may be divided into four climatic districts. The first of these is Eastern Assyria—the country beyond the Tigris. The second is Northern Mesopotamia, being that part which is under the immediate influence of the Armenian mountains. The third division is Central Mesopotamia, including the northern and southern slopes of the Sinjar; and the fourth is Southern Assyria—being that portion which borders on the plains of Chaldaea.

The climate of Eastern Assyria is cool and moist. The proximity of the Zagros with its snowy heights reduces the temperature, wakes the breeze, sends down the showers of rain. Even in summer, when rains are more rare, copious dews are distilled by night, refreshing vegetation and cooling the atmosphere. In winter and early spring there is a heavy rainfall, and the streams run bankful down to join the Tigris. Very rarely does the terrible *shergli*, or hot wind of the desert, blow its withering breath on the green slopes of Adiabene and Chalonitis. Snow falls, but scantily, in December and January, and ice of considerable thickness forms on the ponds and brooks. Farther to the south, in Apolloniatis, the climate grows more torrid, approximating that of Chaldaea. The winters but slightly chill the traveler; the summers scorch and burn.

The climate of Northern Mesopotamia is rather severe. The temperature falls to ten degrees below zero. Winter lasts for half the year. The elevation of the country about the head-waters of the Tigris is as much as one thousand three hundred feet above the level of the sea. The close proximity of the snow-

covered mountains on the north renders the atmosphere invigorating in summer, and in winter adds rigor to the climate. Snow prevails, falling to great depth in the gorges. The spring is late and chill; the early summer brings abundance of blossoms; July and August have excessive heat, the temperature rising to  $110^{\circ}$  or even  $115^{\circ}$  in the shade. The whole range of the thermometer from winter to summer is above 120 degrees, being as great as in any country in the world.

The climate of Central Mesopotamia is milder than in Mygdonia and the north. Here it seldom snows, except on the summits of the Abdul-Aziz and the Sinjar. The winter is no more than four months in length; the spring is as charming as in any region of the globe; for a short season the landscape is carpeted with the richest verdure and adorned with the most beautiful and fragrant flowers; but in midsummer comes that intense heat from which Central and Southern Mesopotamia have always suffered. From noon till night of the summer day nor man nor beast can well endure the glow of the furnace. Fortunately, with nightfall the fiery heat subsides, and the nights and early mornings are not unpleasant. Anon the calm of the day is broken by storms of rain and thunder and hail, bursting from the Sinjar. The tempests are of almost tropical violence, furious with contending winds and lurid with incessant lightnings. After the storm has lashed itself to rest, the earth and air are refreshed, and animals and man find a pleasant respite from the heat. The autumn throughout the greater part of Western Assyria is remarkably fine, suggesting the balcyon days by the banks of an American river.

As Southern Assyria narrows and sinks into the alluvial plain of Chaldaea, the torrid element in the climate becomes more pronounced. A strictly tropical country can not, of course, be found as far north as the thirty-fourth parallel; but the districts of Lower Assyria, too far inland to be moderated by the ocean, too far from the mountains to feel the invigoration of their snows, and near enough to the hot sands of Arabia to inhale their fiery vapor, may well be regarded as suffering

all the ills of the tropics—and without the tropical charm.

It is not to be doubted that in ancient times the climate of these regions was considerably modified by the agency of man. The waters of the two great rivers were carried far into what are now desert districts, and were distributed in channels over the surface of the country. By this means the soil was irrigated and the air cooled. Vegetation, springing rank along the banks of the canals, became at once a cause and an effect of growth and moisture. As far as the power of man could thus be extended the arid wastes were planted with trees and cities. Still, in the greater part of Southern Assyria the country can never have been fertile; and the district between the river Khabur and the northern confines of Chaldaea has always been what it was in the times of Cyrus and Alexander—a country of extreme heat and barren deserts. Xenophon declares that there was no meadow, no tree, no leaf or twig of green, but only a herbless waste, parched by the heat of the sun.

There is, perhaps, no country in the world which is subject to such great changes in the appearance of the landscape as in Assyria. In the spring the sudden outburst of verdure spreads a carpet of green grass and brilliant flowers on every hand in infinite profusion; but no sooner is the summer ushered in than green gives place to yellow, freshness to sterility, life to death. The same district which seems in April and May to be a boundless prairie of blossoms and foliage is in a few weeks burnt to a crisp, blackened and desolate as Arabia.

In modern times the inhabitants of Southern Assyria are dependent upon the course of nature for whatever they produce. Irrigation is but little practiced, and only the sudden gush of seasonable weather in the spring prevents the reduction of the country to a desert. While the pastures are still green from the continuance of the early rains the flocks find a luxuriant supply; and there is even time before the beginning of the drought for the production and harvest of an abundant crop of those cereals which are adapted to short



seasons. After that, all herbage begins to shrivel, the streams dry up to their fountains, and the earth becomes as barren as the alkaline plains east of the Rocky Mountains.

Notwithstanding the fierce summer heats and the long continued drouths to which Assyria is exposed there is no other country better situated by nature for the artificial distribution of water, and the consequent favorable modification of its climate. For hundreds of miles from their sources the Euphrates and the Tigris have so great a fall as to make practicable and easy the distribution of their wealth through all the thirsty districts of which they form the boundaries. Nor were the ancient Assyrians slow to avail themselves of the suggestion of nature respecting the watering of their plains. Besides the canals and aqueducts, the ruins of which are plentifully scattered in Assyria as well as in Chaldæa, much evidence exists of the skill of the people in lifting water from the rivers and distributing it for the use of man and the refreshing of the fields.<sup>1</sup> Machinery of many kinds was erected along the banks of the Tigris, as along the river of Egypt, by which the fertilizing fluid was lifted and borne to where it was required. By this means large districts which are now, from the brief continuance of the spring showers, reduced to a precarious state, with a minimum of population, were, in the times of the Empire, the seat of abundance and luxury—crowded with great markets and populous cities.

The products of Eastern Assyria are not very fully recorded by the classical authors. The olive grew in Chalonitis. Pliny in his *Natural History* speaks disparagingly of the quality of the Assyrian dates. Spices and aromatic plants were found in the valleys east of the Tigris. Xenophon enumerates sesame, millet, wheat, and barley as the principal grain products of Mesopotamia. For its citron trees Assyria was famous from antiquity.

<sup>1</sup> At one place in Aturia the water of the Tigris was carried in a tunnel through the hills and then conducted a distance of eight miles in a direction opposite to that of the tributary streams. The aqueduct was supplied with locks and other contrivances for regulating the supply and flow of the current.

They not only gave fruit to the hand, and fragrance to the sense, but were also esteemed as to leaves and blossoms for their invaluable medicinal properties. The tree was native to the country, and has never flourished equally in any other region. Silk was also, according to Pliny, a natural product of Assyria, the worm producing it being of a peculiar species and unusually large.

It is rather by the present productions of Mesopotamia than by incidental references thereto by ancient travelers and historians that we are enabled to form a true idea of the vegetable and mineral resources of the empire of Sargon and Sennacherib. The general climatic conditions remain unchanged, and the modifying influence of human skill may be fairly estimated. To begin with the fruits, the most important are, as they no doubt were twenty-five centuries ago, the orange, the pomegranate, the apricot, the lemon, the olive, the fig, the grape, the apple, the pear, the quince, the plum, the cherry, melons of many kinds, filberts, pistachio-nuts, and chestnuts. The orange flourishes only in Southern Mesopotamia, and those semi-tropical parts bordering on Chaldæa. The pomegranate grows in all the provinces except where the chill of the mountain peaks is too perceptibly felt. The native place of the fig is on the slopes of the Sinjar and the hills of Abdul-Aziz. Here too the vineyards flourish, as also further south. The lemon accompanies the orange; and the orchards of apples and pears are most productive on the ridges of Chalonitis and Aturia. Along the spurs of the Zagros the olive grows wild, while the fragmentary woods of the north are enriched with abundance of filberts and chestnuts. In the valleys of Eastern Assyria melons flourish, and the pear and the plum produce fairly on both banks of the Tigris.

The edible vegetables of Assyria still more abound. Capers and esculent mushrooms are native to large districts. Beans and peas and lentils yield abundantly and without much labor. Onions, cucumbers, and spinach, and indeed most of the garden products of the United States, have been immemorially cultivated in Assyria. One of the commonest

shrubs of the country is that odorous *absinthium*, or wormwood, mentioned by Xenophon. Its native place is Western Mesopotamia in the region south of the Khabur. Here also are occasional groves of tamarisk near the river. The most beautiful of the natural growths of the sparse woodlands are the myrtles and oleanders, which lift their large and brilliant blossoms in great profusion along the banks of the eastern tributaries of the Tigris; nor should mention be omitted of the famous *Salix Babylonica*, or weeping willow, whose delicate drooping sprays have been the admiration of all peoples.

The list of Assyrian products would not be complete without a mention of manna. It is chiefly secreted by the dwarf oak, from the branches of which, under favoring conditions, it is gathered in considerable quantities. Other trees and shrubs also yield a supply, but less abundantly; and in seasons of plentiful moisture, especially during the prevalence of foggy weather, the manna is distilled on rocks or even in the sand. This variety, though scant in quantity, is greatly prized. In times of drouth there is no secretion at all.

The seasons of the manna harvest are spring and autumn. At these times it is gathered by being shaken upon cloths spread under the oaks. The manna preserves its sweetness only for a brief period after being collected. If not eaten in its natural state it soon sours and becomes offensive. In order to prevent decay, and to give the product a mercantile value, it is boiled into a kind of paste, which can be preserved in cans and transported like other articles of the market.

The mineral supply of Assyria is much more varied and important than that of Chaldaea. Throughout Mesopotamia, as well as in the provinces beyond the Tigris, limestone and sandstone are plentifully distributed. The Mons Masius is built of basaltic rock—a substance almost as firm and heavy as the Syenite of Upper Egypt. The base of the Zagros is packed with several fine varieties of marble, and in Aturia and Adiabene, along the Tigris, beds of gray alabaster furnish a material for the sculptor's chisel hardly surpassed by the soft marbles of Italy. The

Assyrian clay, though unequal in quality to that of the Chaldaean plain, is nevertheless well distributed and of superior quality.

Eastern Assyria had a wealth of metals. In the immediate vicinity of Nineveh are found rich mines of iron, copper, and lead. The ores crop out of the hill-sides and are exposed to view where they were worked by the ancients. In the mountainous regions of the upper Tigris the same metals are found. The Kurdish ranges have mines of silver, tin, and antimony; nor is it improbable that some of the gold of the palaces of the Assyrian monarchs was produced within the limits of the Empire.

Other valuable minerals abounded in different districts. Sulphur, alum, and salt were articles of exportation. In the country between the Lower Zab and the Gyndes inexhaustible supplies of bitumen, naphtha, and petroleum were drawn from pits and wells. Further north, near Nineveh, there were petroleum springs which furnished perennial streams of the same materials. Salt was produced from springs found in the same locality and also from a few salt lakes in Mesopotamia.

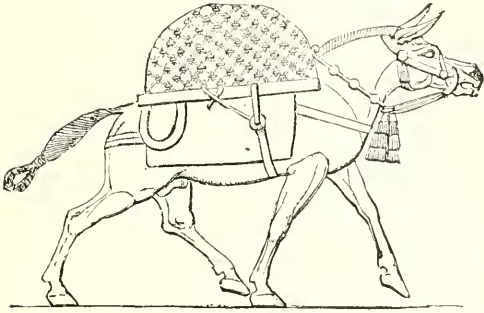
The animal life of Assyria was as varied as the climate. Wild beasts, such as are peculiar to deserts, as well as those whose lairs are in the mountains, abounded both in Mesopotamia and in Assyria beyond the Tigris. The lion roamed over the wastes of the south-west, and was also seen on the cliffs of the Sinjar.<sup>1</sup> In similar situations the leopard, the lynx, and the hyena were found; and the tiger, which is not now a native of this part of Asia, was quite certainly among those creatures with which the primitive Assyrians had to contend for the mastery.

Among the other animals—beasts of the hill-country rather than of the plain—may be mentioned the bear, the jackal, the

<sup>1</sup> Assyrian lions are generally represented in the sculptures as maneless. In some cases the drawing shows a peculiar, horny claw at the end of the tail, half hidden in the tuft of hair—an eccentric feature not known to exist in any living species. In some of the sculptures the lion is shown with a mane, in which case he is a fair counterpart of the lion of the African desert.



wild boar, and the fox. The wild sheep, the ibex, and the gazelle were of the mountains. The wolf, the porcupine, the badger, and the hare were, for the most part, limited to the plains and to regions of moderate elevation. The ibex abounded in the Zagros and in the highest ranges of the Sinjar and Abdul-Aziz. The deer was found only in Eastern



ASSYRIAN MULE.  
From the Sculptures.

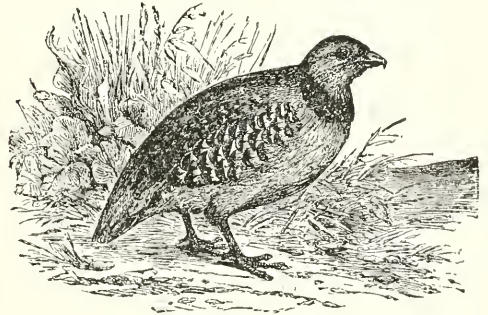
Assyria, near the mountains. The hyena, the lynx, and the beaver were not very common. The last-named animal—differing somewhat in form and instincts from the American beaver—had his habitat on the Khabur, where, until his race was hunted almost to extinction, he built his house and flourished.

According to Xenophon, the most common animal in the region south of the Khabur was the wild ass. At the present day, however, the creature is rare and has even been thought to be extinct in its native country. This supposition is incorrect, the animal still being found in the district in which it was seen by the Greek historian. The Assyrian wild ass is of the genus *Equus*, is delicate in form and color, and exceedingly swift of foot, inasmuch that, when adult and vigorous, it outstrips all other animals in flight. The young of the species are sometimes taken by the Arabs, but pine and die under domestication.

The Assyrian sculptors delighted in drawing animal forms. The inscriptions of Nimrod, Khorsabad, Koyunjik, and Nineveh abound in carvings of wild beasts. The forms of the lion, the leopard, the tiger, the wild boar and ass, the mule, the stag, and the gazelle were in great favor with artists, and the skill with which these animals are carved would, in many cases, do credit to Greece.

The domestic animals of modern Assyria are mostly of species common in Europe and America. And to these must be added the camel. The horse was in use in Mesopotamia, for the saddle but not for draught, long before his introduction into Egypt. Judging from the sculptures, as well as from the existing breeds of the country, the Assyrian animal is, for speed, symmetry, and power, fully the equal of the modern Arabian. From time immemorial the chief wealth of the native tribes of Southern Assyria has consisted in horses. Anciently, as well as to-day, travelers, princes, and kings gratified their pride and ambition by purchasing, albeit at fabulous figures, the fleet and beautiful steeds of the Mesopotamian and Arabian wastes. The Assyrian horses are less in stature than the heavier breeds of the West, but of exquisite symmetry of form and grace of movement.

The cattle of Assyria are relatively poor in quality. Not so, however, the sheep and goats. The former are of good size and well-wooled, furnishing fine, heavy fleeces and a superior article of food. The goat, as in most oriental countries, is the principal dependence of the people for milk and cheese. Asses and mules are chiefly used for carrying burdens and drawing loads—a task to which the horse



ASSYRIAN PARTRIDGE.

is never subjected. In long journeys requiring speed, endurance, and docility, the faithful camel lends his unflagging strength and unfailing patience. There are two species—camels proper and dromedaries, the latter being the more fleet and sagacious.<sup>1</sup>

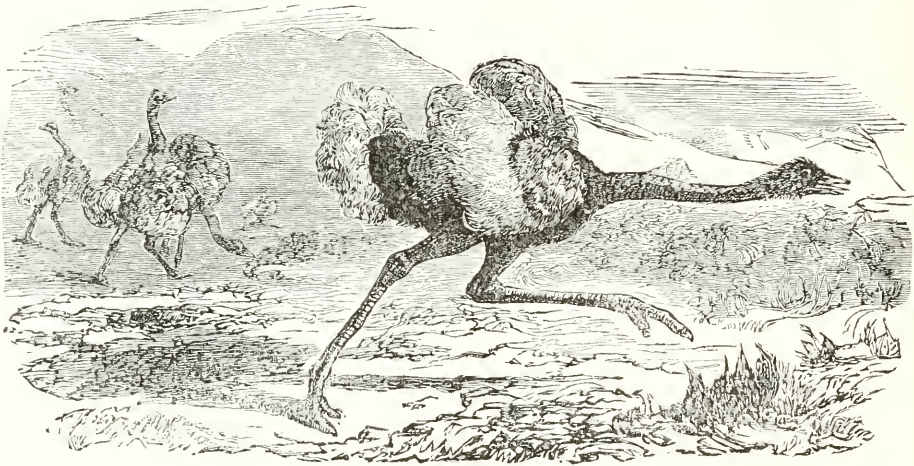
<sup>1</sup> The two-humped camel of Bactria is no longer found in Assyria, though the sculptures show that he was known in the times of the Empire.

The domestic animals of ancient Assyria were nearly the same as those of the present day. The monuments show that the camel was more in use by the enemy than by the Assyrians themselves. The donkey was not in use. The dogs were of a heavy and fierce-looking stock, resembling the mastiff, and quite unlike the fleet and slender greyhound of modern times.

The sculptures and tablets of ancient Assyria have made us acquainted with but three of the birds known to the people of the Empire. These are the vulture, the ostrich, and the partridge. No others have been identified with existing species. The vulture is exhibited in connection with battle scenes, where he

are nearly the same in character with those inhabiting like latitudes in Europe and America. The water-fowl—wild goose, wild duck, teal, tern, plover, sandpiper, and swan—are similar to those of the United States. The crane, the stork, the pelican, and the flamingo, have the same appearance, habits, and haunts which are peculiar to those species in the Southern States of the Union. The most noted Assyrian birds of prey are the eagle, the hawk, the falcon, and the owl. The song birds are the nightingale and the Seleucian thrush; and the birds of the desert and plain are—besides the ostrich—the great and lesser bustard, the sand-grouse, and the francolin.

Assyrian art furnishes abundant proof that



ASSYRIAN OSTRICHES.

is seen devouring the bodies of the slain. Sometimes he is made to execute poetical justice by pursuing and tearing the enemies of the king. The ostrich inhabited Mesopotamia below the Khabur, though he has long since abandoned that region for the wider freedom of the Arabian desert.<sup>1</sup> The partridge of two or three varieties was found in great abundance, and was the delight of sportsmen and gastronomers.

The birds at present inhabiting Assyria—which are no doubt identical with species existing in the country two thousand years ago—

<sup>1</sup>Xenophon describes the ostrich as seen on the line of march, pursued by hunters, fleeing with long strides across the desert, and "using its wings for sails."

the rivers and ponds were thronged with fish. The sculptures are not, however, of a sort to identify varieties, the forms being somewhat rude and conventional. At the present day the two great rivers of Assyria, as well as the smaller streams and the marshes, are crowded, as they no doubt have always been, with barbel and carp, which here grow to an unusual size. In the eastern tributaries of the Tigris, especially in the mountain brooks of the Zagros, trout are found, and in the deeper streams pickerel and pike.

Taken all in all, the physical environment of the ancient Assyrians was not materially different from that of the central latitudes of Europe and America. The variations from this standard were the presence of large waste



districts, the absence of great forests, the fiery heats of summer, and the consequent appearance of semi-tropical plants and animals. In other respects the country in which the Empire planted by Tiglath-Adar and Shalmaneser rose, flourished, and fell, possessed the same

general antecedents of civilization, the same elements of power and development, the same incentives to human ambition and achievement, as have played upon the faculties of man in Central Europe and the United States.

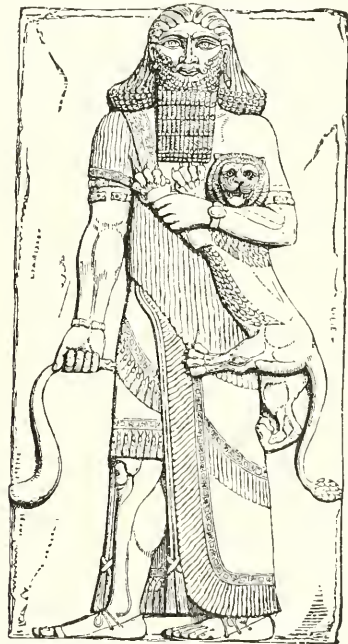
## CHAPTER XII.—PEOPLE AND CITIES.



ASSYRIA was peopled by the race of Shem. Whatever controversy has existed respecting the ethnic character of the primitive Chaldeans, concerning the race affinities of the

Assyrians there is none. The vague conjectures, which until the present century were used as the foundation of historical writings, have given place to exact knowledge, resulting from antiquarian research and definite principles of criticism. Ancient traditions, the discoveries made among the ruins of the country, and the science of language, have all contributed their testimony as to the origin and kinship of the people who built the cities on the Tigris. The stock is called Semitic; its branches are the Aramaic, the Hebrew, and the Arabic. To the first of these, the Aramaic—that is, the race of Arām, or the Highlands—belonged the Assyrians. The latter are thus allied by close affinity with the Syrians, the later Babylonians, the Phœnicians, the Hebrews, and the Northern Arabs. All these people had common progenitors, who, moving westward from Susiana or beyond, spread out into Mesopotamia and thence into Arabia and Syria. The language which has been preserved on the tablets, cylinders, and bricks of the Assyrian ruins is unmistakably of the same origin with the Hebrew and the Phœnician; and unless it could be shown—a thing never attempted—that the people of Upper Mesopotamia had changed their language in some primitive stage of their development, the proof of the Semitic character of the race is positively established.

If we pass from the language of the Assyrians to the traditions of various nations, we find additional evidence of the kinship of Asshur and Shem. In the Book of Genesis, the ancestor of the Assyrians is classified with the progenitors of the Aramaeans, the Hebrews, and the Northern Arabs. The inhabitants of



NINEVITE HERO, SHOWING TYPICAL PHYSIOGNOMY

Kurḏistan, who are regarded as the descendants of the Assyrians, not only speak a Semitic language, but believe themselves to be of the same race with the Arabs and Israelites. The same tradition was held by the people of Assyria themselves, who in their brief historical fragments recognize as their kinsmen the Syrians, the later Babylonians, the Phœnicians, and the Juktanian Arabs. Whatever hesitancy

there may be on the part of some historians and ethnologists to use the term "Semitic" as descriptive of one of the primitive families of mankind, there can be none as it respects the question of classifying in one group the peoples of ancient Assyria, Northern Arabia, Syria, and Canaan.

An examination of the physical characteristics of the Assyrians tends to establish the same conclusion. The art of these people has preserved their face and form and stature. On examining the Assyrian sculptures, even



ASSYRIAN KING.

the uncritical can but be struck with the resemblance of the form and features to those of the Hebrews. Here we have the same face which is seen among the Jewish captives of Amenophis III. on the monuments of Egypt. The Assyrian physiognomy, as determined by the sculptures exhumed from the ruins of Nimrud and Khorsabad, is identical with that which the Israelite has made familiar to all the world. The forehead is low and straight; the brow prominent; the eyes large and oriental; the nose aquiline and sometimes coarse; the mouth firm-set; the lips rather thick; the chin strong and symmetrical.

The same countenance belongs, with slight variations, to the Bedouin Arabs, and with no variation to the present inhabitants of Kurdistan. Such were also the features of the Syrians and Phœnicians, and wherever a Hebrew is found, in any quarter of the world, there the type is perpetuated.

In person the ancient Assyrians were stronger and heavier than any existing Semites except the Kurdistanese. The Arab of to-day is rather light and slender. The Hebrew of the Orient has not the short, stout body peculiar to his kinsmen of the West. The ancient Assyrian was brawny and powerful. The tremendous limbs depicted in the sculptures of Nimrud suggest to the beholder the massive muscles and incalculable strength of gladiators. The weapons which they handle and the sports in which they engage show that the Assyrians, more than any other Asiatic people of their times, were men of the heroic mold. And the sculptors, to whose delineations we owe our knowledge of this robust and vigorous race, seem to have taken delight in doing full justice to the brawny limbs and powerful breasts of their countrymen.

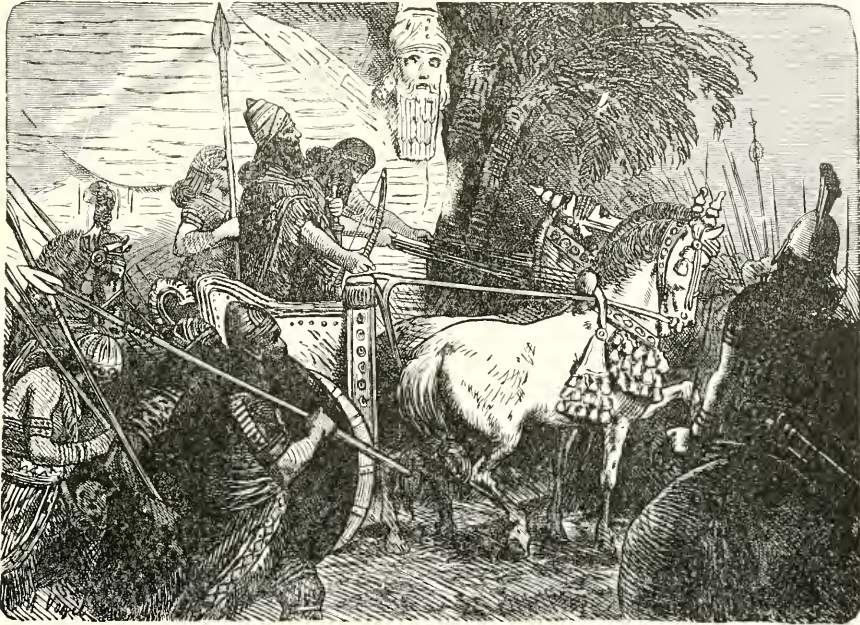
In the traits of mind exhibited by the Assyrians there is additional evidence of their Semitic origin. Like the Israelites and the Arabs, the people of Assyria were devoted to religion. The public documents—statutes, edicts, and proclamations of the kings—which the tablets have preserved are characterized by the same iteration of religious forms which marks all the literary productions of the Semitic race. Prayers, invocations, solemn appeals to their gods, praise to the hidden power who ripens the first fruits and gives the victory in war—such are the dominant ideas in the laws and state papers of the Assyrian kings, and such have ever been the prevailing forms of expression in all branches of this family of men. The Bedouin of to-day who dismounts from his camel and prostrates himself on the gleaming sand of the desert bears not more certain testimony to his race affinity than did the inhabitants of Upper Mesopotamia in their prayers, and psalms, and proclamations. The language is the tongue of Israel,



though used in the praises of Baal and Astarte.

The ancient Assyrians were a people of extraordinary valor. Everywhere man is seen

bodies mutilated, in proof of the victorious vengeance of the conqueror. The heads of the slain are chopped off with swords and enumerated by a scribe, indifferent as a hunter



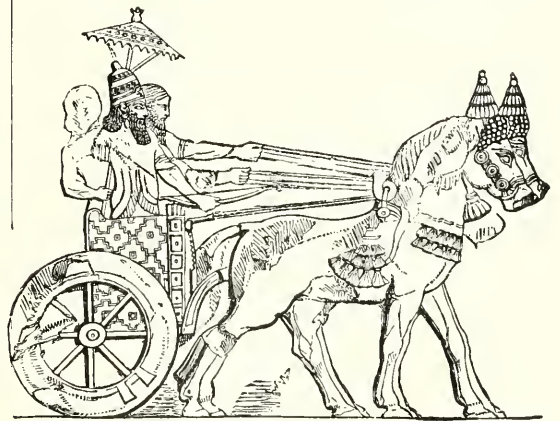
ASSYRIANS GOING TO BATTLE.

Drawn by H. Vogel.

in heroic action. He struggles with the adversary. With the strong lion he grapples hand to hand. Against all the ferocious creatures of the deserts and mountains he goes forth without trepidation. Nothing can surpass the defiant courage with which he hazards his person in the conflict. He meets the wild bull, maddened with wounds, and brings him bellowing to his knees. He quails, not before any aspect of man or beast, but with firm set lips and eyes fixed on his antagonist bends to the struggle and rises victorious.

The stalwart character and aggressive bearing of the Assyrians were particularly shown in war. The same ferocity which they manifested in the pursuit and destruction of beasts they also exhibited in hunting men. The sculptures show that the feeling of the Assyrians towards the foe was one, not of hostility only, but of hatred and contempt. Against the enemy the bow is drawn with vindictive willingness. The dead of the vanquished army are trampled in the dust, and their

counting his game. Before the walls of a mutinous city the bodies of the rebels are impaled on stakes. Others of the dead are flayed; for the skins are an article of mer-



ASSYRIAN WAR CHARIOT.

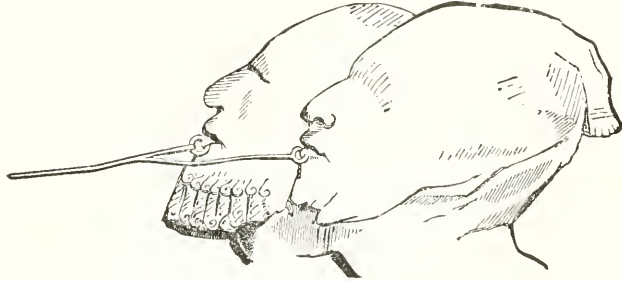
chandise; and anon a group of captives appear, led by cords with rings inserted in the under lips of the prisoners, after the manner of leading beasts. This, however, is true only

of captive men: women the Assyrian soldiers treat with respect and tenderness.

In personal bearing the Assyrians were characterized by pride and haughtiness. The inscriptions and tablets are filled with vain-

peace, and perfidious in war, so too were the Phœnicians and the Romans. On the whole, the moral standard of the Assyrians, and their consequent conduct in the practical affairs of life, were not different from that of other ancient nations inflamed by successful conquests, and made arrogant by the possession of unlimited power.

In their luxurious habits the later Assyrians resembled the Romans. In the early epochs of the robust and manly virtues foreign wars swept into the capital city, as afterwards into Rome, legions of captives, trains of spoils and treasures. The great monarchs of the Empire, corrupted by



CAPTIVES OF THE ASSYRIANS.

glorious boasting. The other nations are described as cowards, whose gods have abandoned them for shame. Fools also are the aliens, unworthy of the favor of either earth or heaven. They are fit only to be spurned—ground under the heel of Assyria, whose cities are great, whose armies are always victorious, whose gods are wise and mighty. No good thing is conceded to foreign nations. They are weak, effeminate; even their own deities have given them over to merited destruction. Like the language of the Greeks and the Romans respecting the barbarians is this jargon of Assyrian pride towards the peoples beyond the borders of the Empire. Like Jewish anathemas poured on the heads of the Gentiles is this pompous strain of self-adulation wherewith the Assyrians celebrated themselves and disparaged the neighboring nations.

The historians and prophets of Israel denounce the Assyrians as a people of cunning and cruelty. Part of this may, no doubt, be charged to the enmity existing between the two nations; but it is clear that the people of Assyria were not free from subtle and treacherous practices. Craft and cruelty were, however, as they are to-day, the common vices of the Asiatics; and the frenzied denunciations of Jewish authors come with a bad grace considering that their own annals are stained with deceit and treachery and blood. If the Assyrians were in the habit of breaking their treaties, so also were the Greeks. If the people of Nineveh and Babylon were crafty in

riches and booty, then began to set the example of voluptuous living. Princes and priests vied with each other in luxury; and the people, who might have been capable of liberty, fell into licentiousness. The philosophy of Assyria, teaching that happiness was at one with license, gave the reign to individual will, and enthroned pleasure as the chief aim and end of human endeavor. And though the native vigor of the race was for a long time proof against the effeminating tendencies of wealth, the time came when the national character yielded to those vices which attend upon material magnificence, and sank into decay.

The art and learning of Assyria were, for the greater part, derived from the older civilization of Chaldaea. But the Assyrians were by no means wanting in original force and genius. Whether as



ASSYRIAN PRINCESS IN FULL DRESS.

it respects a certain skill in mechanical invention or creditable achievements in those higher arts which humanize mankind, they reached a degree of excellence not hitherto attained in Asia. Especially in political



science and in the development of civil institutions did the Assyrians surpass any contemporaneous nation. The administrative skill displayed by the government in



ASSYRIAN PRINCE IN FULL DRESS.

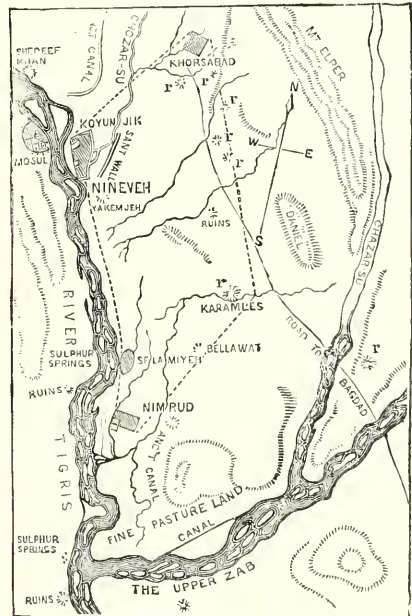
the brighter epochs of the Empire would have done credit to the later states of the West. The aptness and ability of the Assyrians in organizing, equipping, and training armies has been proverbial for twenty centuries, and their fierce valor on the field of battle is recorded wherever their history has been mentioned. Only a knowledge of the means by which the forces of nature are subordinated to the will of man was lacking to give to the Assyrians the precedence in military renown over all the nations of antiquity except the Romans. The greatness and glory of the people is fully conceded by the bards of Israel, especially by Isaiah and Ezekiel, whose writings are filled with mingled praise and censure of that colossal power which, under the similitude of a lion, is represented as "devouring the prey and tearing it asunder for his whelps."

The architecture of a non-literary people is the best record of their grandeur. The houses and cities which men build are commensurate with their ambition. Great building springs not so much from sense and necessity as from imagination and dreams—a certain yearning to express in tangible form the outlines of things seen by vision and the inspiration of genius. Races without imagination live close to the ground. They crawl

into hovels. They sleep a gross and sensuous sleep. They dream not of palace and city. Without are tall, green trees, and white clouds piled up mountainous, the arching dome of heaven, and the glitter of the stars; but these things react not on the dull senses of an unimaginative people. Only in the spirit of him who dreams of palms and fountains can spring the desire, the will, to hew the airy column, to rear the splendid edifice, to adorn his abode and glorify the records of his race with palace and temple and tomb.

In monumental grandeur Assyria stands next to Egypt. The great cities of the Upper Tigris, though inferior in splendor to the marvels of the Nile valley, were the admiration of their own and after times. The existence of these renowned cities, albeit the dust of centuries has settled on their ruins, proves beyond a doubt the amazing vigor and intellectual force of the race of men who built them and gloried in their splendor.

Opposite the modern village of Mosul, on the eastern bank of the Tigris, in latitude 36° 20' N., lie the ruins of NINEVEH, the capital of



THE REGION ABOUT NINEVEH.

the Assyrian Empire, and one of the great cities of the ancient world. The site is at present marked by two remarkable mounds, the one called Koyunjik and the other Nebbi-Yunus.

These mounds are distant from each other a little more than half a mile, and between them flows the Khosr-Su, a small tributary of the Tigris. The mounds are of vast proportions. The Koyunjik covers an area of over a hundred acres, and rises to the height of ninety-five feet above the plain. The Nebbi-Yunus has an area of forty acres and a height of over a hundred feet. The mass of the larger mound is so immense that, according to careful estimates, it would require the continuous labor of twenty thousand men for a period of six years to raise it to its present proportions. The structure is elliptical in shape, rising in a gradual slope on one side and abruptly on the other. This immense artificial elevation was crowned in ancient times with the palaces of the Assyrian kings, and the ruins of these magnificent edifices now lie imbedded in the surface.

The smaller, Nebbi-Yunus, is triangular in shape, and is cleft in twain by a deep ravine which, in the course of centuries, has been washed through its central part. The western half is known as Jonah's Tomb, and the eastern portion is used as a burying-ground by the Turcomans and Kurds who have possession of the site of the ancient city. This mound, like the Koyunjik, was covered anciently with public buildings and royal palaces.

Nineveh had a river front of about three miles. This was guarded throughout with a wall stretching along the river bank from the upper to the lower limits of the city. The bed of the Tigris, however, owing to a change in the channel, now lies about a mile to the west of the line of the ancient wall. This western rampart embraced in its course both of the mounds above referred to, so that originally their site was on the bank of the river. The northern wall runs back from the Tigris to the distance of between one and two miles. The eastern rampart is above three miles in length and approaches to within about a thousand yards of the river, which is reached by the shortest of the four walls by which the city was originally inclosed and defended. The whole circuit of the walls was about eight miles, and the area of the city thus included by impregnable defenses was nearly a thou-

sand eight hundred acres. Many of the cities of the East number from one hundred to two hundred inhabitants to the acre—an estimate which would indicate a population for ancient Nineveh, within the walls, of from one hundred and eighty thousand to three hundred and sixty thousand souls. Outside of the defenses the city, no doubt, extended far to the east and north, and in all probability beyond the river to the west.<sup>1</sup>

The dimensions of Nineveh have been greatly overestimated. The discovery of the ruins of magnificent cities in the immediate neighborhood of the capital has led many antiquarians to suppose that the whole district for a distance of many miles was one immense municipality. The space in which the remains of Khorsabad, Koyunjik, Nimrud, and Keremles—the four great ruins of this region—are found, is an oblong square, eighteen miles in length and twelve miles in breadth; and there have not been wanting eminent scholars and historians who have maintained that this whole district *was included in Nineveh*. The area thus described is about ten times that of London, and it seems quite inconceivable that so great a district should have been covered by a single city. The researches of Layard and others have shown quite conclusively that the four ruins above referred to are really the remains of four distinct cities, and that only one of these—Koyunjik—is included within the limits of what was Nineveh. Nevertheless, so wide were the bounds of each, and so far forth stretched the suburbs of the one towards the other, that ancient travelers, such as Diodorus, might well have considered the whole region as one vast city. In passing from the one to the other, however, there is always found a considerable space unmarked by ruins, and the bricks and tablets prove that each city had its own name and institutions.

<sup>1</sup> If we are to suppose that the part of Nineveh included within the walls bore about the same proportion to the whole as did *Roma Quadrata* to the imperial city, it is safe to conclude that the above estimates of the extent and population of the capital of Assyria are greatly below the truth. In most cases the walled outline of old cities included but a fraction of the district covered with buildings and thronged with human life.



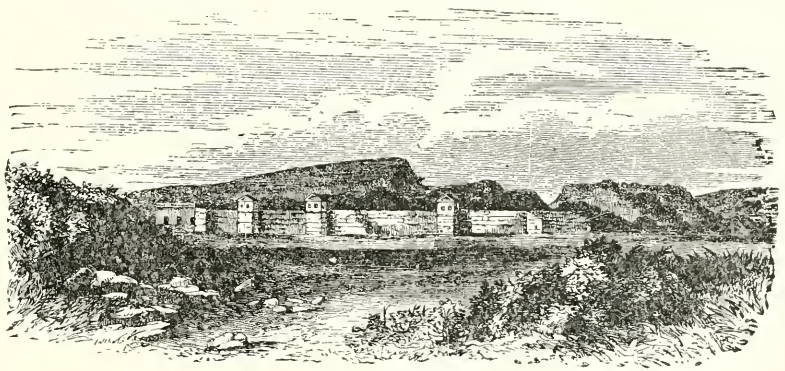
The modern Nimrud is called Calah in the inscriptions of that locality; Khorsabad is written as Dur-Sargina, or City of Sargon; while the bricks of Keremles show that the ancient name of that place was the City of God.<sup>1</sup> It is only the ruin of Koyunjik and the neighboring remains known as Nebbi-Yunus that can be properly identified as the capital of the Assyrian Empire.

The wall which inclosed Nineveh was of enormous proportions. Xenophon describes it as being fifty feet in thickness and a hundred and fifty feet high. Diodorus says that three chariots could drive abreast on the top; and Layard admits that the ruins of the ramparts are so vast as to justify the description given by the ancient historians. According to the details furnished by Xenophon the first fifty feet of the wall was constructed of hewn blocks of fossil-bearing limestone, polished to smoothness on the outside, and finished above in a series of battlements. At this point the thickness of the wall was diminished, and thence carried up with sun-dried bricks. At the top the structure was again broken into ornamental battlements and towers.

At irregular intervals the rampart of the city was pierced with openings for gates. The most important of these was about the middle of the northern wall. Here a great gateway, fifty feet in height, entered the city. At the outer and inner openings stood colossal figures carved in stone—bulls with the heads of men. The wall above was surmounted with lofty towers and others of less elevation were raised

at intervals along the summit of the rampart. The gateway itself was provided, in the center of the wall, with vast recesses or chambers on either side, in which bodies of armed men might be stationed to repel attack. The entrance was guarded by triple gates, and was arched above with solid masonry ornamented with reliefs. The floor of the gateway was paved with flags of limestone, and upon these slabs are seen to the present day the marks made by the wheels of the war-chariots of Assyria as they went forth to conquest.

Great as were the walls that surrounded Nineveh the defenses were still further increased by a barrier of water on all sides. On the west, along the whole extent of the city, lay the Tigris; and just outside of the short wall on the south a natural tributary



SITE OF NINEVEH.

made access from without impracticable. Around the remaining two sides, and close to the rampart, a great moat, filled with water from the Khosr-Su, hindered all approach.<sup>1</sup> On the north side of the city, and beyond the wall and moat, are the remains of a fortress; and far beyond the eastern and southern ramparts the lines of ancient circumvallation and detached earthworks are discoverable. No city of antiquity was protected by a more elaborate and well devised system of defenses than was the capital city of the Assyrian Empire.

<sup>1</sup> The statement of the author of the Book of Jonah that there were in Nineveh one hundred and twenty thousand people who did not know their right hand from the left, is perhaps a metaphor intended to describe the extreme ignorance or moral blindness of the whole population. Taken literally the statement would indicate either an enormous population or a dense ignorance inconsistent with the building of great cities.

<sup>1</sup> In one place a moat, two hundred feet broad and of great depth, is carried through silicious conglomerate for a distance of two miles, and on either side of the ditch, which was filled with water from the Khosr, was a strong and high wall, rising on the outside, even at the present day, to the height of a hundred feet from the bottom of the moat.

Of the internal structure of Nineveh the ancient historians have given us no elaborate account; nor are the ruins in such a condition as to indicate with any considerable precision the character of the city. The lines of the principal streets have not as yet been traced. The sites of the great buildings with which it is certain the city abounded have only in a few instances been identified. The warlike kings whose conquering soldiery made the earth tremble and the splendid edifices wherewith they adorned their capital have gone down to dust together. No doubt the elegant and princely parts of Nineveh lay along the Tigris, in the western district of the city. Here are the two chief ruins of Koyunjik and Nebbi-Yunus, on which were the palaces of the kings, and here has been exhumed the larger part of those interesting remains by which the life, manners, and language of the Assyrians have been so richly illustrated.

About thirty miles down the Tigris from Nineveh are the ruins of Nimrud, the ancient CALAH. The remains are found on the east bank of the river, a short distance above the confluence of the Greater Zab. Calah was the second city of the Empire. The ruins at present cover about a thousand acres, being more than one-half as great in extent as those of Nineveh.

It is evidenced by the ruins, moreover, that the Tigris has carried away a part of the remains, and the small tributaries of this region have also reduced the limits of the ancient city. Calah, like Nineveh, was surrounded with a great wall, which was surmounted with towers and pierced at intervals with gateways. The general shape was rectangular, but on the southern side the limits of the city have been so obliterated by the hand of time as to be no longer distinguishable. As in the case of Nineveh, the Tigris has, on the west, receded from the rampart which it once skirted until a low-lying plain a mile in width stretches between the river and the wall. On this western side of the ancient city, and overlooking the bed of the Tigris, was an elevated plateau, raised artificially to the height of forty feet and covering an area of sixty acres. On this mound stood the

royal palaces, and it is in this quarter that the antiquarian has made his most interesting discoveries. The platform itself was built of successive layers of sun-dried bricks, and the edges of the mound were protected by ramparts of solid masonry. These were ascended from the lower parts of the city by flights of steps, inclined planes, and staircases of stone. Nearly the whole of the elevation is covered with ruins and relics, the *débris* of fallen palaces and temples.

Calah was seen and described by Xenophon, who passed that way with the retreating Greeks. He speaks of it as a vast deserted city, formerly inhabited by the Medes. The walls are described as twenty-five feet in thickness, a hundred feet high, and nearly seven miles in length. The foundation of this extended rampart was of limestone to the height of twenty feet, and the upper portion of burnt bricks. Xenophon also mentions the remarkable tower or pyramid which stands at the north-western angle of the elevation here described, rising in its present condition above the surrounding country to the height of a hundred and forty feet. It is the most striking object of all the remains in the neighborhood of Nineveh. On this summit originally stood what was perhaps the greatest and most splendid of all the tower-temples of Assyria—a structure, as is shown by the foundation, about a hundred and sixty-seven feet square at the base, and rising in a succession of diminishing rectangles to the height of fully two hundred feet.

Ascending the Khosr-Su from Nineveh to a distance of nine miles, the traveler comes to the village of KHORSABAD, the site of Dur-Sargina, another buried city. The ruins here, though less in extent than those of the capital, are of almost equal magnificence. Here again we have the rectangular rampart drawn around the city, with the four sides thereof facing the cardinal points of the compass. Here, too, are the artificial elevations or flat-topped mounds from which the proud palaces of kings and princes looked down upon the city and surrounding country.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It appears that Khorsabad, Nimrud, and one or two other cities in the immediate vicinity of



The wall of Khorsabad is about two thousand yards in extent on each side, and is less massive than that drawn around the capital and Nimrud. About the middle of the north-west side and occupying a part of the line of the rampart was the usual palace-mound, on which stood the principal buildings of the city.

About fifteen miles due east from Nineveh are the ruins of KEREMLES, the fourth of those cities which antiquarians have been disposed to include within the limits of the capital. If such a conjecture could be entertained, it would indicate an area for the entire city of not less than *two hundred and sixteen square miles!* Certain it is that at Keremles, as well as at Calah and Khorsabad, the ruins are indicative of royal residences and the presence of princely modes of life.

Passing from these cities immediately associated with the capital, the next in importance among the Assyrian ruins are those of ASSHUR, marked by the modern village of Kileh-Shergat. The site is on the west bank of the Tigris, about seventy miles below Nineveh. From this point southward the remains begin to partake of the peculiarities of Babylonia, and to be no longer distinctly Assyrian. Like the greater cities to the north, Asshur was quadrangular. The lines of the walls are still traceable across the plain, and the mounds within the ramparts are of the same general character as those already described. One of the palace-mounds within the inclosure of the city is two and a-half miles in circumference,

Nineveh, were a kind of suburban capitals, to which, perhaps, at certain seasons of the year, the Assyrian kings betook themselves for a temporary residence. The style of the palace ruins in four or five of these cities is unmistakably royal, indicating that they were built and occupied by kings or princes of the highest rank.

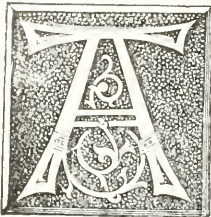
and is raised in some places as much as a hundred feet above the plain. This stupendous platform is covered with heaps of rubbish, fragments of hewn stone, masses of burnt brick, shattered remains of unknown structures, the *débris* and dust of ages.

Besides the extensive ruin of Kileh-Shergat, not many sites of ancient cities have been discovered west of the Tigris. The ancient Nazibina has been identified with the modern Nisibin. In like manner, the town of Diarbekr, on the Upper Tigris, is thought to mark the place of the ancient Amidi. Passing to the east, in the region between the Greater and Lesser Zab, the modern Arbil is easily identified with the ancient Arbela, the scene of one of Alexander's great battles. In the vicinity of Nineveh several villages—Tarbisa, Selamiyeh, and Senn—are thought to cover the ground once occupied by important towns and cities. Many other places, especially in Mesopotamia, are known only approximately or not at all.

The names of a multitude of cities, towns, and localities have been preserved, and their sites in several instances determined with some degree of certainty. After the conquest of Assyria by the Medes, the cities, particularly those west of the Tigris, fell rapidly into decay. The building activity of the nation which had wrought such wonders was suddenly paralyzed, and the splendor of fane and palace was soon hidden in the smoke of devastation, or dimmed and defiled by the dust that rolled in clouds after the conquering legions of a foreign soldiery.

Of the great deeds of the Assyrians, considered as a people—of their renown in war and progress in peace—it is now appropriate to speak.

CHAPTER XIII.—CHRONOLOGY AND ANNALS.



ASSYRIA was colonized from Chaldea. According to Genesis, Asshur went forth from the land of Shinar and builded Nineveh. It appears clear that at a certain epoch the spirit of colonization prevailed in Lower Mesopotamia. One company under the leadership of Terah left Ur, and settled in Haran. Another colony—progenitors of the Phœnicians—departed from Chaldea, and established themselves on the shores of the Mediterranean. A third and more important migration was conducted up the Tigris, and choosing the region afterwards known as Adiabene, laid the foundations of Asshur—so called from the tribal name of the colony. Around this city as a center and germ soon grew the dominions of an independent province, widening at first into a tributary kingdom and afterwards into a vast and aggressive empire.

Among the ruins of Kileh-Shergat and other Assyrian cities are found unmistakable traces of the Chaldean or Babylonian origin of the people. The oldest bricks are stamped with Babylonian characters, and bear witness to the fact that the country at that time was under the rule of provincial governors. An important tablet also contains the proof of the

coëxistence of Chaldean and Assyrian kings and of their relations by treaty. The names of several monarchs of the most ancient times are thus preserved, and a dim outline given of the royal families, their intermarriages and lines of descent. The elements of a meager and imperfect history of primitive Assyria are thus exhumed from the dust.

Data for establishing a trustworthy chronology of the earlier epochs are vague and fragmentary. Conjecture and right reason, rather than ascertained facts, have been called in to fill out the broken outline of the provincial and kingly periods of Assyrian history. By this means a sketch, not wholly imaginary but falling far short of authenticity, has been produced of the movements of civil society in Assyria before the establishment of the Empire. After the accession of Tiglathi-Adar<sup>1</sup> at the beginning of the fourteenth century B. C., the scheme of chronology may be fairly regarded as established on historical foundations. Before that period all dates in Assyrian history are the result of conjecture and hypothesis.

Gathering together the best results that have thus far been attained for the construction of a chronological outline, the following table may be accepted as the nearest approach to historic accuracy which is attainable in the present state of knowledge:

PERIODS.	RULERS.	COMMENTS.	DATES.
PROVINCIAL PERIOD.	Bel-Sumili-Kapi, . . .	Provincial governors sent out from Babylonia. Names preserved on fragments of tablets found in Assyria.	Before the middle of the fifteenth century B. C.
	Irba-Vul, . . . . .		
	Asshur-Iddin-Akhi, .		
EARLY KINGDOM.	Asshur-Bil-Nisi-Su, . .	{ Contemporary with Purnas-Puriyas, King of Chaldea, }	About 1440 B. C., to 1420 B. C.
	Buzur-Asshur, . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . .	" 1420 " 1400 "
	Asshur-Upalit, . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . .	" 1400 " 1380 "
	Bel-Lush, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1380 " 1360 "
	Pud-Il, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1360 " 1340 "
	Vul-Lush, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1340 " 1320 "
	Shalmaneser I, . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1320 " 1300 "

<sup>1</sup> Frequently called Tiglathî-Nin—Nin being another name for Adar.



PERIODS.	RULERS.	COMMENTS.	DATES.
THE GREAT EMPIRE.	Tiglathi-Adar (Nin), . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	About 1300 B. C. to 1280 B. C.
	* * *	A break in the succession, . . .	
	Bel-Kudur-Uzur, . . . . .		" 1230 " 1210 "
	Nin-Pala-Zira, . . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . . .	" 1210 " 1190 "
	Asshur-Dayān I., . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1190 " 1170 "
	Mutaggil-Nebo, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1170 " 1150 "
	Asshur-Ris-Ilim, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1150 " 1130 "
	Tiglath-Pileser I., . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1130 " 1110 "
	Asshur-Bil-Kala, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 1110 " 1090 "
	Shamas-Vul I., . . . . .	Brother of preceding, . . . . .	" 1090 " 1070 "
	* * *	A break in the succession, . . .	
	Asshur-Mazur, . . . . .		
	* * *	A break in the succession, . . .	
	Asshur-Dayān II., . . . . .		" 930 " 911 "
	Vul-Lush II., . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 911 " 889 "
	Tiglathi-Nin II., . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 889 " 883 "
	Asshur-Izir-Pal, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 883 " 858 "
	Shalmaneser II., . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 858 " 823 "
	Shamas-Vul II., . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 823 " 810 "
	Vul-Lush III., . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 810 " 781 "
LATER KINGDOM.	Shalmaneser III., . . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . . .	" 781 " 771 "
	Asshur-Dayān III., . . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . . .	" 771 " 753 "
	Asshur-Lush, . . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . . .	" 753 " 745 "
	Tiglath-Pileser II., . . . . .		" 745 " 727 "
	Shalmaneser IV., . . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . . .	" 727 " 722 "
	Sargon, . . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . . .	" 722 " 705 "
	Sennacherib, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 705 " 681 "
	Esar-Haddon, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 681 " 668 "
	Asshur-Bani-Pal, . . . . .	Son of preceding, . . . . .	" 668 " 626 "
	Asshur-Emid-Ilin, . . . . .	Successor to preceding, . . . . .	" 626 " 625 "

On the above scheme it may be remarked that the dates are certainly established only as far back as the reign of Asshur-Dayān II., in 930 B. C. From this time downwards to the overthrow of the kingdom under Asshur-Emid-Ilin, a period of three hundred and four years, the list embraces fifteen monarchs, which gives an average of twenty years to each sovereign. Applying the same average to the seventeen preceding rulers, we find the establishment of the early kingdom to date back to about the middle of the fifteenth century B. C. But it will readily be confessed that the assignment of twenty years to each of this long line of monarchs is no better than a rough approximation to the truth. So far as the lists themselves, and the order of succession, and in general the relations of descent, are concerned, a tolerable degree of certainty has been attained, but the dates of all the earlier period are tentative and conjectural.

In the second place, it should be remembered that no consecutive annals of the so-called Early Kingdom exist. True it is that a great and aggressive empire like that of

Tiglathi-Adar can not spring into being at once. Previous progress in civilization, with special reference to the forms and modes of administration, must have been reached by stages slow and painful before the nation can display itself with regal splendor or imperial power. Again, it is shown by analogy that a race of kings—natural leaders and rulers by preëminence—generally precedes the pronounced expression of nationality in the history of peoples. In the case of Assyria we have the names and order of succession of seven such rulers; and even before the first of these a broken list of provincial chieftains or governors has been preserved. The names, if not the deeds, of these primitive heroes of the Assyrian dawn are as real as those of Numitor and Romulus.

A few glimpses of the historic life of Assyria are caught as far away as the times of the earlier kings. No account, indeed, has been preserved of the revolt or peaceable secession by which the Assyrian provinces became independent of the mother kingdom of the South. But the time came when the

growing people about Asshur were not longer dominated by Chaldean authority. A royal family sprang up in the North having established relations with the princes of Babylon.

Especially did ASSHUR-UPALLIT, the third of the early kings, cultivate the friendship and favor of the Southern monarchy. He gave a daughter in marriage to Purna-Puriyas, the Chaldean, and the son of this union became king after the death of his father. A revolt presently ensued, the subjects of this grandson of Purna rebelling against him until the Assyrian king marched an army into Lower Mesopotamia, overthrew the usurper, Nazi-Bugas, and put another son of Purna on the throne. The whole transaction shows that the rulers of Chaldea and Assyria regarded each other as equals, and were capable of acting from the same large motives which determine the policy of rulers in times of the most advanced civilization.

After Upallit for a period of sixty years—covering the reigns of BEL-LUSH, PUD-IL, and VUL-LUSH—nothing except the names of the kings is known of the civil history of Assyria. The bricks of Asshur show that that city was still the capital; neither Calah nor Nineveh had yet been built.

In the next reign, that of SHALMANESER I., the seat of power was transferred further north and to the eastern bank of the Tigris. The whole region on both banks of the river was now dominated by the Assyrians. The semi-peninsular and easily defended district between the Tigris and the Greater Zab was chosen as a site for the new city of Calah or Nimrud. This delightful locality became known as Aturia, or Assyria Proper, and remained through many reigns the center of influence in the Empire. From this city the first conquering armies of Assyria were led forth by Shalmaneser to enlarge and strengthen the borders of his dominions on the north. Successful expeditions made the king's arms known on the Upper Tigris where towns were conquered and colonies planted, and the royal power magnified in the presence of the barbarians. It is the epoch of the first Assyrian wars.

TIGLATHI-ADAR, son and successor of Shal-

maneser, is regarded by common fame as the founder of the Empire. Herodotus bears witness to the fact that the supremacy which had hitherto been Babylonian became Assyrian. The spirit of conquest became dominant in the Northern kingdom. After a successful war in Lower Mesopotamia, Tiglath-Adar subscribed himself as conqueror of Babylon. He even established his capital in the subject metropolis, and therefrom issued his edicts during the greater part of his reign. Here, too, a branch of his family continued in authority for nearly a century. At times these Assyrian vice-regents of Babylonia were in revolt against the Ninevite dynasty. For a season the independence of Chaldea is partially restored or again lost as some more ambitious monarch of the Empire would turn his arms to the south. This condition of semi-dependence continued for five or six centuries; though there was a never a time after Tiglath's conquest when Assyria was not regarded as the dominant power between the Armenian mountains and the Persian Gulf. The race ascendancy of the Empire during the whole period from the fourteenth to the seventh century B. C., is clearly marked in the prevalence of Semitic names and Assyrian inscriptions at Babylon and throughout Chaldea. Nor does it appear that at any time the old Chaldean dynasty was able to reassert itself successfully against the rulers of Nineveh.

After the death of Tiglath-ADAR the succession was broken for a period of a half century. Whether BEL-KUDUR-UZUR, whose name next appears on the tablets, was a relative of the preceding monarch or the founder of a new dynasty has not been determined. After Bel-Kudur, however, the succession is again unbroken till the reign of Shamas-Vul I., in 1070 B. C.

The reign of King Bel-Kudur is chiefly noted for his disastrous war with Babylon. The viceroy of that city and province raised the standard of rebellion against his master, who, in 1210, went out to war with his refractory vassal, and was himself defeated and slain in battle. Vul-Baladan, the Babylon prince, now inflamed with victory, organized an expedition against Nineveh, and proceed-



ing thither was met near Asshur and annihilated by the army of Nin-Pala-Zira, who had succeeded Bel-Kudur on the throne of Assyria.

ASSHUR-DAYAN, the third Assyrian emperor, was blest with peace. First of all he marched into Babylonia and restored that province to order. He next busied himself with the demolition of the old and half-ruined temple of Vul at Asshur—a work so vast that the reconstruction of the edifice was not undertaken for the space of sixty years.

Of MUTAGGIL-NEBO, the fourth from Tiglath-Adar, only a single record has been preserved, and in that we are told that “Asshur, the great Lord, aided him according to the wishes of his heart, and established him in strength in the government of Assyria.” With the reign of ASSHUR-RIS-ILIM, the next in succession, the military spirit was revived, and an inscription records that the monarch was a powerful king, the subduer of rebellious countries, and the conqueror of all the accursed. He waged several foreign wars, carrying his arms—if one tradition is to be credited—as far west as the Mediterranean. Certain it is that he made a great campaign against the Babylonians, whose viceroy Nebuchadnezzar—first sovereign of that illustrious name—had raised the standard of revolt and led his rebellious subjects up the Diyaleh, and along the foot-hills of the Zagros towards the Assyrian capital. The invasion was met by the king’s army and beaten back, but Nebuchadnezzar’s forces again gathered head and advanced across the open plain until they were met by Ris-Ilum’s generals and completely routed. Forty chariots and a banner remained in the hands of the victors.

With the accession of TIGLATH-PILESER I. the details of Assyrian history become more abundant. The new monarch came to the throne about 1130 B. C. The story of his military exploits and civil career is elaborately recorded on two cylinders, which are preserved in the British Museum. The record is made by the king himself, and making allowance for the egotism which has always characterized royal autobiography, and the bombast peculiar to oriental style, the inscription may be accepted as a true history of Tiglath-Pileser’s reign.

This ancient chronicle begins with a lengthy and formal invocation to the gods of Asshur, by whose help and protection the king’s greatness had been won and maintained. Then follows a detailed account of the five great campaigns which he had conducted against foreign nations. The first of these was directed to the north against the Moschians, at the foot of the Taurus. For fifty years the tribes on this skirt of the Empire had neglected to pay the tribute which had been imposed on them by previous rulers. Now they were subdued, and the tribute-money regularly exacted. Another rebellious Assyrian dependency, called Kasiyara in the language of the inscription, was also subjected with a great slaughter of armies and overthrow of towns and cities. The second campaign was waged through the same provinces, and was chiefly directed against the Kaskians and Urumians—two tribes which had been making depredations on the Assyrian frontier. These also were overpowered. The wealth of the nation, including one hundred and twenty chariots of war, was transferred by the conqueror to his own capital. Turning to the east, the armies of Tiglath-Pileser next crossed the Lower Zab, and carried the banners of Assyria to the foot of the Zagros.

In the third year of his wars the king led his forces westward to the Euphrates, against the tribes called the Naïri. This semi-barbarous people had never been subjected to Assyrian authority. In Mesopotamia the progress of the king was not seriously resisted, but west of the Euphrates the Naïri gathered in great strength, and fought bravely in defense of their country. The discipline of the royal armies, however, soon triumphed over native valor, and the scattered tribes were pursued as far west as the Mediterranean. Great spoils were taken, and a tribute exacted amounting to two hundred cattle and twelve hundred horses.

The third campaign led to a fourth. The Aramæans, whose country skirted the Euphrates from Is to Carhemish, attracted the attention of Tiglath-Pileser, and drew him, already heated with conquest, into an invasion. This was the most brilliant and successful of

his wars. He swept through the long, narrow territory of the Aramæans for a distance of two hundred and fifty miles. Six cities were captured, and the whole country ravaged to its northernmost limits. The Assyrian army then drew back to the capital, bearing vast quantities of booty.

In the next year a fifth and last campaign was conducted in the country between the Greater Zab and the Eastern Khabour—"the land of Muzr." Here the spurs of the Zagros rendered military movements difficult, and the courage of the mountaineers of Kurdistan was conspicuous in defense of their fastnesses; but the king's army assaulted the strongholds and put down all resistance. Arin, the capital, was taken, and a tribute was imposed as the condition of peace. The Comari, also, a neighboring nation that had lent aid to the Kurds in their recent hostilities, were next punished for their part in the war. Their army of twenty thousand men was routed, and their castles and cities taken and burnt. At the close of the chronicle of his exploits the king sums up as the result of his great campaigns forty-two conquered countries, extending from the headwaters of the Greater Zab to the Euphrates, and beyond to the west as far as the Mediterranean. Cities, towns, castles, kings and peoples had been subdued and reorganized "under one government"—the imperial government of Assyria.

The great exploits of Tiglath-Pileser as a hunter of wild beasts are likewise thought worthy to be recorded. Wild cattle had he pursued with his arrows. Nearly a thousand lions had he destroyed while going to and fro on his conquests. Some of the ferocious creatures of the mountains and plains he had confined in cages and dragged back, bound with thongs, to the capital. There did the royal keepers show them alive as the indubitable proofs of the king's prowess and of the favor of Nin and Nergal, who gave the advantage in conflict, and guided the royal arrow in its flight.

Great buildings also attested the enterprise of the king. The gods of Asshur-Ishtar, Bel, and Il were honored with new and magnificent fanes. Mention has already been made

of the demolition by Asshur-Dayan of the ancient temple of Anu and Vul, which, after remaining for six and a half centuries the wonder of the capital, had fallen into ruin. Neither Asshur-Dayan himself, nor Nebo, nor Ris-Ilum had been able to restore the structure to its former grandeur. It remained for the victorious Tiglath-Pileser, enriched by conquest and inflamed with pride, to rear again in pristine splendor the barbaric temple of the gods of his fathers.<sup>1</sup> The wars of Tiglath-Pileser were mostly waged with tribes which had just emerged from barbarism. The half-civilized peoples whose countries skirted the dominions of Assyria on the west, the north, and the east, were but poorly able to cope with the well-drilled legions of Pileser's army. Only in one direction was there a kingdom possessing sufficient political unity to stand on equal terms with the conquering monarch of Asshur. On the south lay Babylon, old and well-organized, and of ancient renown in arms. In the earlier years of his reign, and even

<sup>1</sup> As a specimen of the royal style, the following somewhat vainglorious account of the rebuilding of the temple of Anu and Vul, as given in Tiglath-Pileser's inscription, is appended: "In the beginning of my reign, Anu and Vul, the great gods, my lords, guardians of my steps, gave me a command to repair this their shrine. So I made bricks; I leveled the earth; I took the dimensions; I laid down the foundation upon a mass of strong rock. This place, throughout its whole extent, I paved with bricks in set order; fifty feet deep I prepared the ground: and upon this substructure I laid the foundation of the temple of Anu and Vul. From its foundation to its roof I built it better than it was before. I also built two lofty towers in honor of their noble godships, and the holy place, a spacious hall, I consecrated for the convenience of their worshipers, and to accommodate their votaries who were numerous as the stars of heaven. I repaired and built and completed my work. Outside the temple I fashioned every thing with the same care as inside. The mound of earth on which it was built I enlarged like the firmament of the rising stars, and I beautified the entire building. Its towers I raised up to heaven, and its roofs I built entirely of brick. An inviolable shrine for their noble godships I laid down near at hand. Anu and Vul, the great gods, I glorified inside the shrine. I set them up in their honored purity, and the hearts of their noble godships I delighted."—Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. II., pp. 69-70.



during his great campaigns, the relations between Tiglath-Pileser's government and the viceroyalty of Babylon continued friendly; but after his other wars were completed, and he had for a while devoted his energies to works of peace, the king's belligerent disposition broke out in an invasion of Chaldea.

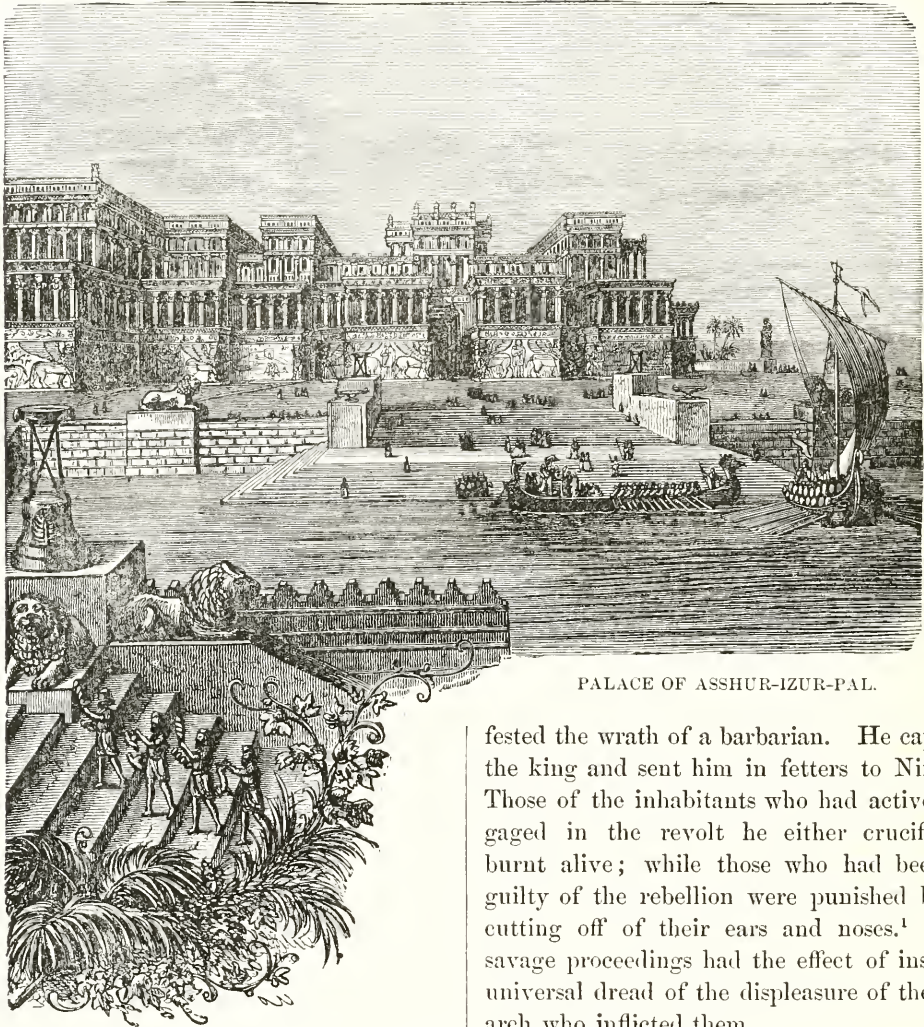
He first led his army into the northern provinces, and for two years laid waste the country. The two Sipparas were taken, and Kurri-Galzu, and Opis on the Tigris. Finally Babylon itself was besieged and captured, after which the royal army began to withdraw up the valley of the Euphrates, taking several cities on the march, and meeting but feeble resistance. No sooner, however, had the Assyrian forces departed from Babylon than Merodach-Iddin, the viceroy of the kingdom, gathered an army and began a vigorous pursuit. Hanging on Tiglath-Pileser's rear, he gained several advantages, insomuch that the Assyrian march was converted into a retreat. An assault was made on the king's camp, and the gods of Asshur were captured and borne away in triumph to Babylon, where they were kept, to the shame of the Ninevites, for more than four hundred years. Neither Tiglath-Pileser himself nor any of his successors was able to retake the idols which the king had borne with him through all his conquests, and which had thus become a part of the fame of Assyria.

About the close of the twelfth century B. C., Tiglath-Pileser was succeeded on the throne by his son, ASSHUR-BIL-KALA. Of this prince and his reign not very much is known. The Babylonian difficulties which had for several generations afflicted the kings of Assyria, again broke out in the reign of Bil-Kala. Shapik-Zira, prince of Babylon, following the example of his father, Iddin-Akhi, revolted, and the Assyrian monarch made an effort to subdue him, but with what success is uncertain. There are some evidences also that Bil-Kala devoted his energies in part to the religious enterprises which had characterized the time of his father. The temples, however, do not bear any distinctive marks of this prince's fame or ambition. He was succeeded on the throne by his younger brother, SHAMAS-VUL,

by whom a temple was built at Nineveh. Besides this fact nothing is known of the events of his reign. It is a time of decadence in the history of Assyria. For two centuries—from the close of the reign of Bil-Kala to the accession of Tiglath-Nin, in B. C. 889—there is an almost total blank in the annals of the Empire. Only the names of the kings (and but a few of these) have been preserved to indicate the outline of events and the ebb and flow of power.

The continued existence of a single dominion, with its capital at Asshur, was of itself an important fact in ancient history. The families of the Assyrian kings and nobles became well established. The Assyrian stock was the most notable in Western Asia. The princesses of this line were sought in marriage by the illustrious sovereigns of Egypt, and the kings of the surrounding nations nearly all courted the favor of an alliance with the House of Nineveh. As the result of such unions Assyrian names begin to appear in the royal families of the circumjacent kingdoms. For when has the mother forgotten to call her child by the name of her father or brother?

Passing over the undated reign of ASSHUR-MAZUR and the obscure times of ASSHUR-DAYAN II. and Vul-Lush II., we come, with the accession of TIGLATHI-NIN II., to another dawn in Assyrian history. The reign of this second Nin was brief and inglorious, and his name and place in the history of his country are only preserved in a single inscription. Not so, however, with his son and successor, the distinguished ASSHUR-IZIR-PAL, who came to the throne in B. C. 883. His accession marks the beginning of a great renaissance in the art, learning, and political development of Assyria. Whether in warlike vigor or civil enterprise, this monarch stands preëminent among his contemporaries. In the first six years of his reign he waged no fewer than ten campaigns against the surrounding nations, carrying his victorious arms from the upper fountains of the Euphrates on the north-west to the spurs of the Zagros, where the tributaries of the Diyaleh gather their waters, on the south-east. The Kurdish tribes and mountaineers of Armenia; two races of Western



PALACE OF ASSHUR-IZUR-PAL.

Mesopotamia called the Serki and the Laki; the rebellious inhabitants of Assura; the Nairi, previously mentioned as a subject-people of the Upper Tigris; the highlanders of the Mons Masius and of the district on the north of Susiana; the Shuhites, who had again revolted; and especially the Syrians, including the people of Carchemish and westward through the regions about Antioch and Aleppo as far as Tyre and Sidon and the other Phœnician cities—were each in turn made to acknowledge the valor and supremacy of Asshur-Izur-Pal's armies. In the progress of these extended expeditions, not only the military prowess but also the ferocious disposition of the king was fully developed. At the siege of the rebellious town of Assura he mani-

festated the wrath of a barbarian. He captured the king and sent him in fetters to Nineveh. Those of the inhabitants who had actively engaged in the revolt he either crucified or burnt alive; while those who had been less guilty of the rebellion were punished by the cutting off of their ears and noses.<sup>1</sup> These savage proceedings had the effect of inspiring universal dread of the displeasure of the monarch who inflicted them.

The general effect of Asshur-Izur-Pal's wars was greatly to enrich the Empire. Increased tributes poured into the capital. Contribu-

<sup>1</sup>Such brutal methods of subjugation were too much employed by the Assyrian generals and kings. The case of Asshur-Izur-Pal seems to be extraordinary. He appears not to have been troubled with compunctions, but to have gloried rather in his savagery. With the utmost *nonchalance* he thus relates the sequel of the capture of Tela, one of the towns that resisted his authority: "Their men, young and old, I took prisoners. Of some I cut off the feet and hands; of others I cut off the noses, ears, and lips; of the young men's ears I made a heap; of the old men's heads I built a minaret! I exposed their heads as a trophy in front of their city. The male children and the female children I burnt in the flames! The city I destroyed and consumed and burnt with fire."



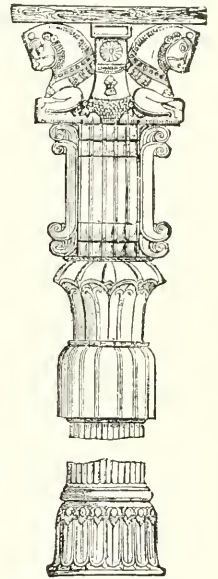
tions of gold, silver, horses, and cattle were levied without scruple and collected without abatement from the conquered countries. A great stimulus was thus given to the architectural and æsthetic development of the Assyrians. The later years of the reign of Asshur-Izir-Pal became a kind of Augustan Age, in which literature and the arts flourished with a brilliancy which even from the dust of centuries has flashed out on the surprised vision of modern times. This era marks a revolution in architectural taste—a change so great as strongly to distinguish the remains of the earlier age at Asshur from the splendid ruins found at Calah and Nineveh. Whereas the former are so rude and unpretending as to be at once assigned by the antiquary to the monumental endeavors of a primitive people, the latter are so grand in conception and so artistic in execution as to be properly classified with the great works of Greece and Egypt.

The favorite city of Asshur-Izir-Pal was Calah. Under his ambitious and powerful patronage this soon became the metropolis of the Empire. Here he built a royal palace that far outshone any structure hitherto reared within the limits of Assyria. The edifice was three hundred and sixty feet in length by three hundred feet in breadth. The general plan of the structure was a series of halls and chambers and a great central court a hundred and thirty feet long and a hundred feet in width. The palace proper was raised upon a vast rectangular platform of burnt bricks cased with slabs of hewn stone. Facing the city on the north and the Tigris on the west were flights of steps ascending to the grand façades, while beside the high gates by which access was had to the principal hall, were sculptured slabs representing the great deeds of the king. The gateway in the southern wall was guarded on either hand by winged bulls with human heads carved in yellow limestone, and the halls and chambers within were decorated with enameled bricks, sculptures, and frescoes.

The splendid example of the king as a builder and patron of art reacted powerfully upon the princes and nobles of the Empire.

Calah and Nineveh rose in grandeur. The rough stone-work and rudely burnt clays of the preceding ages gave place all at once to elaborate designs in bas-relief and magnificent architectural ornaments. The influence of the capital was felt even to the provincial towns, and the native energy of the Assyrian race quickly displayed itself in the higher achievements of civilization. Manufactures sprang up and flourished. Shops for the making of fabrics, furnaces for the burning of enameled bricks, forges for the working of metals, factories for the building of coaches and war-chariots, studios for the production of designs, the treatment of colors, and the use of the chisel—grew up, flourished, and multiplied. Assyrian artists traveled to Phœnicia and even to India, and introduced on their return the styles and designs of both the East and the West. Memorial obelisks like those of Egypt were seen on the banks of the Tigris. The taste of Assyria became cultured, cosmopolitan.

Asshur-Izir-Pal died in B. C. 858, leaving a consolidated Empire which extended from the mountains of Armenia to the Mediterranean Sea. He was succeeded on the throne by his son, SHALMANESER II., who reigned for thirty-five years. This prince had grown up among the Assyrian soldiery. As a boy he had accompanied his father on his great campaigns, and had imbibed the spirit of conquest. As a consequence of this training his chief energies were devoted to war. No fewer than twenty-seven campaigns are enumerated in the history of his military career. By far the most important of these wars were those waged against Babylonia and Damascus. In the former country a civil conflict had broken out between Sum-Adin, the king, and his rebellious younger brother named Bel-U sati. This



ORNAMENTED PILLAR,  
TIME OF ASSHUR-  
IZUR-PAL.

disturbance gave Shalmaneser an opportunity to interfere, and in the eighth year of his reign he led an army into Babylonia and overthrew and slew the insurgent brother; but instead of settling the crown upon the rightful claimant he wheeled suddenly about and marched into Babylon. Here he was received by the people as a deliverer, and easily made himself master of the country. He then continued his conquest southward through Chaldaea to the Persian Gulf, and afterwards returned without opposition to his own capital.

In 874 B. C. Shalmaneser began his wars with Damascus. Ben-Hadad, king of that country, had become alarmed at the growing dominions and aggressive spirit of the Assyrians, and had determined to anticipate the expected invasion of his territory by preparing to repel it. He accordingly entered into a league with Tsakhulena, king of Hamath, and Ahab, king of Israel. The kings of the Hittites and Phœnicians were also drawn into this alliance; and when Shalmaneser marched westward into Syria he was confronted by a large and ably commanded army. Nevertheless in a great battle which ensued the allied forces led by Ben-Hadad were defeated. Twenty thousand of their number were killed, and the spoils of the field remained in the hands of the Assyrians. The resistance, however, had been so serious, the battle so hotly fought, that Shalmaneser withdrew from the country, and did not renew the war for a period of five years.

By and by Shalmaneser, having completed some other conquests, returned to his Syrian war. The Western confederacy had meanwhile fallen to pieces. Hamath had internal dissensions, and Phœnicia had shut herself up in her fortified towns. Ben-Hadad, however, induced the Hittites to join him, and stood forth to meet the Assyrians in battle. The victory, though indecisive, was again gained by Shalmaneser, but he was unable after the conflict to press forward to complete his conquest. After retiring a second time to his own country, he gathered a third army, far surpassing the others in numbers and equipments, and returning against Damascus met and defeated the army of Ben-Hadad with

great slaughter. The war, however, continued. Ben-Hadad was assassinated by the treacherous Hazael, who usurped the crown and the command of the army. Taking advantage of the mountain range he posted himself in the valley of Celo-Syria, where he was assaulted by the Assyrians and utterly routed. Sixteen thousand of his men were killed, and the spoils of the battle-field, including eleven hundred and twenty chariots of war, remained in the hands of Shalmaneser. The spirit of resistance was broken. Town after town was taken, and the Assyrian banners were carried without further opposition to the shores of the Mediterranean. It was at this time that Jehu, king of Israel, submitted to the yoke of Assyria, and sent an embassy, bearing presents of silver and gold, to the court of Shalmaneser.

After completing his wars, Shalmaneser, like his father, turned his attention to the adornment of his capital. The great temple of Nin, the Assyrian Hercules, which had been begun by Asshur-Izir-Pal, was now brought to completion. Not choosing to occupy the palace which his father had built, the king selected another site within a stone's throw of the former edifice, and there reared for the gratification of his pride a structure more vast and splendid than any hitherto built by an Assyrian monarch. The literary development, however, which had been so rapid in the preceding reigns, was, in the time of Shalmaneser, completely checked, and the style employed in the inscriptions is even more deficient in perspicuity and elegance than in the time of the king's grandfather. The narrative given by the rude annalist of the court is fit to be compared with only the coarsest essays of primitive literature.

A single monumental record of Shalmaneser's reign is worthy of special note. Under the *débris* of the king's palace at Calah (Nimrud) the historian Layard discovered an obelisk of black marble, perfectly preserved and covered on its four sides with bas-reliefs and historical inscriptions. The sculptures represent the monarch as receiving tribute from five nations. Ambassadors bearing the presents are led before the king, to whom they bow, laying down at his feet the treasures of



gold and silver and ivory which they have brought from distant regions to appease the majesty of Assyria. The inscriptions contain the annals of the Empire during the reign of Shalmaneser, with the usual vainglorious phraseology of the court.

The last years of Shalmaneser II. were clouded with disaster. One feature of his military policy had been distasteful to the people. Several of his campaigns had been intrusted to Dayan-Asshur, the leading general of the army. The ascendancy of this mil-

itary hero over the king and court was a source of displeasure and jealousy. Meanwhile, with the long continuance of Shalmaneser's reign, the ambitious Asshur-Danin-Pal, eldest son of the monarch, grew restive with the unprecedented procrastination of his father's death, and thinking to seize the fruit before it was ripe raised the standard of revolt. Twenty-five different cities, including Asshur (the former capital), Arbela, and several other old and important centers, ready to hail the rising sun, accepted the revolution as an accomplished fact, and proclaimed Danin-Pal as king. In this emergency the aged monarch conferred

the regency upon Shamas-Vul, the younger brother of the rebel, and intrusted to him the command of that part of the army which had maintained its loyalty. With these forces Shamas-Vul took the field, rapidly reduced the revolted cities, overthrew his brother in battle, and restored the king's authority throughout the Empire. Soon afterwards Shalmaneser died, and the loyal son was rewarded with the crown, which he received with the title of SHAMUS-VUL II.

The reign of the new king lasted thirteen



JEHU'S EMBASSY BEFORE SHALMANESER.

itary hero over the king and court was a source of displeasure and jealousy. Meanwhile, with the long continuance of Shalmaneser's reign, the ambitious Asshur-Danin-Pal, eldest son of the monarch, grew restive with the unprecedented procrastination of his father's death, and thinking to seize the fruit before it was ripe raised the standard of revolt. Twenty-five different cities, including Asshur (the former capital), Arbela, and several other old and important centers, ready to hail the rising sun, accepted the revolution as an accomplished fact, and proclaimed Danin-Pal as king. In this emergency the aged monarch conferred

years—from 823 to 810 B. C. His public career was not so distinguished as had been foreshadowed by the ambitions of his youth. His royal acts, like those of his father and grandfather, are chronicled on an obelisk, which has reached our times in a tolerable state of preservation. From this we gather an outline of his military exploits and what he achieved in peace. His campaigns were directed first against the half-civilized Nāiri, whom the memory of previous chastisements was not sufficient to keep in subjection. Afterwards the king's army was engaged on the eastern frontier, where, for the first time, the

swords of Assyria clashed with those of Media and Persia—an ominous sound, foretoking the day when the Aryan race, bursting through its mountain barriers, should break the dominion of Shem and take Western Asia for a heritage. From his eastern war, in the fourth year of his reign, Shamas-Vul led his army against Babylonia. He entered the country near the mouth of the Diyaleh and pressed on towards the capital; but before reaching his destination he was encountered by Belatzu-Ikbi, king of the Babylonians, who had gathered his forces, seized an advantageous position, and stood ready for the hazard of battle. The Assyrians gained the day. Of the Babylonians eighteen thousand were killed and three thousand captured. Shamas-Vul pressed hard after the flying enemy. Near the city Belatzu-Ikbi rallied all his forces, embracing his allies on the south and west, and staked all on the issue. An overwhelming defeat followed. The Babylonian army was decimated. The royal banner of Babylon and the pavilion of the king were taken, with two hundred tents and one hundred chariots of war. The power of the Babylonians was broken for several generations, and the son of Shamas-Vul became viceroy of the South. The obelisk of Shamas-Vul exhibits the same spiritless style of writing which prevailed in the times of his father: a flat narrative of monotonous facts, inelegant and dull. Nor does it appear that the architectural taste of the king and his nobles was superior or even equal to that of the times of his grandfather. He was content to occupy his father's palace at Calah, and to pass the days not given to military enterprises in rather inglorious ease. Only once does the chronicle of the king break off to tell the story how, while conducting his Eastern war, at the foot of the Zagros, the monarch entered with spirit into a hunt of wild bulls, and himself killed many in the chase.

The annals of the reign of VUL-LUSH III., who succeeded Shamas-Vul on the throne in B. C. 810, are meager and imperfect. Enough is known, however, to show that his kingly career, extending over a period of twenty-nine years, was crowded with great events. Like

his ancestors for several generations, his chief energies were devoted to war. Under the influence of his military successes and his skill in administration, the bounds of the Assyrian Empire were permanently enlarged. In seven different campaigns he carried his banners across the Zagros into Media. Three successful expeditions he made into Syria, pressing his way even to the city of Damascus, which he entered in triumph. Turning to the north-west, he swept through Palestine, reducing Tyre and Sidon, breaking the power of the Philistines, and subjecting Edom to his authority.

In the further prosecution of his wars Vul-Lush humbled the Nairi, and the Persians and the Medes sent presents in token of submission. Babylonia remained loyal to the king, who journeyed into that country, entered the temples of Borsippa and Babylon, and offered sacrifices to Nebo, Nergal, and Bel. Like his father, Vul-Lush had but little ambition as a builder. His inscriptions bear witness that he restored many of the public edifices, which through neglect were falling into ruins. His own palace was at Nineveh, on the mound called Nebbi-Yunus; but this vast heap, in which, perhaps, lie buried the records of his reign, has never been properly explored.

Two important relics of Vul-Lush and his time have reached our day. These are duplicate statues of the god Nebo, which, though imperfect as works of art, are of the highest interest from the inscriptions which they bear. The dedication on the pedestal is to the lord Vul-Lush and his queen SEMIRAMIS. The place in time and the rank of this famous princess are thus fixed by indubitable evidence. The credulous historians of Greece and Rome had assigned Semiramis to an epoch almost as remote as the founding of Nineveh, and had given to her a character as wild and overdrawn as the dreams of a mediæval fiction. She was represented as the most extraordinary personage of the ancient world, subduing princes by her fascinations, and leading vast armies to victory. A part of this romance can no doubt be accounted for by the fact that the ancient Assyrians carefully



secluded their women, regarding them as inferiors unworthy of commemoration in chronicle or sculpture. It thus came to pass, that when at rare intervals, by some fortuitous circumstance, a princess was thrown into the foreground, Oriental imagination and Western credulity combined to invest her with the character of a goddess. So, when the real Semiramis, a princess of Babylon, having rights of her own to the viceroyalty of the South, was taken in marriage by Vul-Lush III. and brought as queen to Nineveh, she was treated with exceptional regard. The Assyrians accepted her as an additional guaranty of the stability of the Empire; and the Babylonians, looking from afar, saw in her the possible mother of a line of kings who should be *their* rulers as well as monarchs of the North. Beyond the exceptional prominence thus given to Semiramis, it does not appear that her personal genius or achievements would have greatly distinguished her above the other noble ladies of her time. The fabulous stories told of her by the uncritical historians from Diodorus to Rollin, when stripped of fiction and tradition, shrink into a plain narrative of a Babylonian princess, married to an Assyrian king, retaining her own rights, and adding by personal superiority to the dignity and charms of the palace-halls of Nineveh.

After the death of Vul-Lush III., in B. C. 781, a period of decline ensued, in which, for thirty-six years, no great events are recorded. The names of three kings belonging to this period—SHALMANESER III., ASSHUR-DAYAN III., and ASSHUR-LUSH—have, indeed, been preserved; but their reigns were brief and devoid of interest. It appears that, after the great wars of the preceding half century, by which the boundaries of the Assyrian Empire had been pushed back and established at the foot of the mountains and the shore of the sea, the energies of the kings and people, finding vent and development no longer in the peril and glory of military campaigns, fell quickly into decay. The luxury which follows successful war brought effeminacy into the market-place and ease into the palace. The heavy sleep which follows indulgence was for a while un-

broken, even by the rumor of barbarians in arms or the clamor of rebellious cities.

In the fifteenth chapter of the Second Book of Kings, an account is given of the invasion of the kingdom of Israel by PUL, king of Assyria. Menahem, the Israelitish ruler, levied upon his chief men and the people a tribute of a thousand talents of silver, and gave it to Pul to be at one with him and his interests. The narrative seems to place this Pul in such relations of time as to make him the immediate predecessor of Tiglath-Pileser II., who came to the throne of Assyria in B. C. 745. The Assyrian Canon, however, gives for the eighth century the following list of kings:

Shalmaneser III., . . . . .	781 B. C. to 771 B. C.
Asshur-Dayan III., . . . . .	771 " 753 "
Asshur-Lush, . . . . .	753 " 745 "
Tiglath-Pileser II., . . . . .	745 " 727 "
Shalmaneser IV., . . . . .	727 " 722 "
Sargon, . . . . .	722 " 705 "

In this list there is no place for Pul. The name itself is not an Assyrian name, and does not anywhere occur in the annals of the Empire. The most probable explanation of this striking and patent contradiction in the records of the two nations is that the Jewish writers frequently use the term "king" of subordinate rulers.<sup>1</sup> Pul was, probably, a Babylonian officer of high rank, perhaps the viceroy himself, who, in the disturbed and obscure epoch following the death of Vul-Lush III., became sufficiently independent of the Ninevite dynasty to make war and levy tribute on his own account. A campaign thus issuing from *Babylon* against Israel could easily be mistaken for an *Assyrian* invasion, and the leader of such an expedition would be more than usually susceptible to the influences of a bribe, such as Menahem gave him, "that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his [own] hand."

<sup>1</sup> Thus we have in the Book of Daniel the striking account of the overthrow of Babylon by Cyrus, in which Belshazzar, the lieutenant of Nabonadius, is constantly referred to as *king*. Belshazzar, or Bel-Shar-Uzur, as the name is written in the Babylonian inscriptions, never held a higher rank than satrap of Babylonia, and can only in an accommodated sense of the word be called "King of the Chaldeans."

After an obscure interval of thirty-six years the Empire, under TIGLATH-PILESER II., again emerges from darkness. Just previous to this event, in the time of the temporary eclipse of Assyrian greatness, occurred the episode of Jonah, who came into the capital and began crying in the streets, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The alarm of the king—perhaps Asshur-Lush—led to a reform in the morals of the city, and the threatened judgment, for which the prophet sat waiting in his booth of woven boughs without the gates, passed by. The relation of blood, if any, of Tiglath-Pileser II. to the preceding kings of Assyria is unknown. There are evidences that the line of succession was broken, and that Tiglath-Pileser was a logical necessity of his times rather than the legitimate heir to the Empire. Certain it is that he came to the throne in the character of a reformer. The previous era of weakness had encouraged lawlessness and insurrection in the provinces. The frontiers were broken in by the audacity of barbarian chieftains. To reëstablish his borders and restore the spirit of the Empire were the first care of the king.

At this time Nabouassar, the ruler of Babylon, encouraged by the long lapse of Assyrian authority, had risen to the rank of a rival, and the petty princes who held sway in the southern parts of Chaldæa had ceased to pay tribute to either the Northern or the Southern court. It was against this race of kinglets that the reorganized Assyrian army, led by Tiglath-Pileser, was first conducted. The king's campaign in Lower Mesopotamia was immediately and completely successful. The towns of Sippara and Kurri-Galzu were taken, and whole country bordering on the Gulf brought quickly into subjection. Nabonassar was forced to renew his allegiance, and Tiglath-Pileser was publicly proclaimed as king of Babylon. In the temples of that city, as well as on other famous shrines of the land, the monarch of Assyria offered sacrifices to the gods of the South, and then returned victorious to his own capital.

Still more important were the wars of Tiglath-Pileser in Syria. During the decadence of the three preceding reigns, the kings

of Damascus, Samaria, and Tyre, like the Babylonian rulers, had broken faith with the House of Nineveh and assumed their independence. In 743 B. C. Tiglath-Pileser set out to subdue them. Rezin, king of Damascus, was first made to feel the angry stroke of the power which he had provoked to war. In Samaria, Menahem, who was still ruler of Israel, was brought into subjection; and the kings of Tyre, of Hamath, and of the Arabian tribes on the borders of Egypt, were quelled by siege or battle. Azariah, who led forth the army of Judah against the Assyrian, was defeated, and the whole land was traversed by the invader as far as the sea of the West. The campaign lasted for five years, and was never seriously impeded; and yet, as soon as the army of Tiglath-Pileser was withdrawn into Assyria the insurrectionary movement began again in all the Syrian nations.

The leaders of these Western rebellions were Rezin, king of Damascus, and Pekah, king of Israel. Instigated by their example, the Hittites and the people of Hamath were induced to take up arms. Ahaz, king of Judah, refused to become a partner to the league; and when the rulers of Israel and Damascus undertook to compel him to join the alliance, by declaring war against him, with the avowed purpose of setting up a partisan of their own as king of Jerusalem, Ahaz sent an embassy to the court of Tiglath-Pileser, offering to become his vassal if he would send aid against Rezin and Pekah. The Assyrian monarch at once complied, and in 733 B. C. marched for the third time into Syria. Rezin was beaten in battle and driven into Damascus, which after a two years' siege was taken by the Assyrians. The rebel king was captured and slain, and all resistance ended.

Pileser next wheeled his army into Samaria, attacking first the provinces beyond the Jordan. Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh were overrun, and the people led into captivity. Beyond the Euphrates, along the Khabour and other rivers of Upper Mesopotamia, the vanquished Israelites were scattered in colonies and towns, where further rebellions would be impossible. The inhabitants of a few of the towns west of the Jor-



dan shared the same fate, and the shadow of Assyria already fell athwart the whole of Palestine.

The Assyrian monarch next invaded and subdued Philistia. The tribes of Ishmaelites who peopled the peninsula of Sinai were next smitten and scattered. Their native queen, Khabiba, was deposed, and in her place an Assyrian governor was appointed who could be trusted to do his master's will. Returning from these conquests to Damascus the king summoned the rulers of the neighboring states and chiefs of the tribes to send in their submission and pay the tribute which he had imposed upon them. To this call the kings, great and small, of nearly all the Syrian nations responded. Abaz, king of Judah; Mitenna, of Tyre; Pekah, of Samaria; Khanun, of Gaza; Mitinti, of Ascalon; and the chiefs of the Idumæans, the Moabites, and the Ammonites,—sent in the tokens of their submission and paid the tribute exacted by the Assyrian.

Tiglath-Pileser again crossed the Euphrates. For a few years affairs remained quiet in the West. Meanwhile, however, Hoshea, an Israelitish chieftain, made a conspiracy against Pekah, the king, and killed him. The disturbed condition of affairs in Samaria which followed this insurrection, together with a revolt in Tyre, headed by Mitenna, made it once more necessary for Tiglath-Pileser to march into Syria. Hoshea quickly submitted, and agreed to hold his kingdom as tributary to the great king. The rebellion in Tyre was also easily quelled, and Tiglath-Pileser, after a bloodless campaign, returned to his capital of Cahah, where, for the remainder of the eighteen years of his reign, he devoted himself to the work of improving and adorning the city. The great palace of Shalmaneser II. was restored to its pristine grandeur, and a new edifice of the king's own, little inferior in beauty and magnificence to the great works of the classical age of Assyrian architecture, was raised on the mound of Nimrud.

In 727 B. C. Tiglath-Pileser II. died and was succeeded on the throne by SHALMANESER IV. The attention of this monarch was almost immediately drawn to the kingdom of Israel. Hoshea, the king, had ever since his

accession to power been hot and cold in his allegiance. With a change of rulers in Assyria he began to make demonstrations of independence, but a threatened invasion by Shalmaneser brought him into submission.

Meanwhile, however, a condition of affairs had supervened in Egypt, which fanned into new heat the slumbering disloyalty of the Israelitish king. The monarchy of Lower Egypt had gone to decay. The spirit of the old Pharaohs was extinguished, and the country lay open to the designs of the first ambitious comer. Shabak, the Ethiopian, saw his opportunity, and leading an already victorious army down the valley of the Nile, quickly subverted the kingdom. Bocchoris, the Saïte Pharaoh, was taken and burnt to death. All remains of opposition were stamped out by the ambitious Ethiopian, whose fame soon spread throughout Syria and the East. In him Hoshea of Israel found a natural confederate, and having secured his coöperation, hastened to break his own pledges of allegiance to Assyria. Shalmaneser quickly scented the revolt, and came with impetuosity upon his perfidious subject. Hoshea was defeated in battle, captured, and cast into prison. In the further prosecution of his campaign the Assyrian king laid siege to Samaria. The city was bravely defended by the garrison, aided by Egyptians, but after a two years' environment was taken by storm.

During the progress of this siege the city of Tyre, encouraged by the obstinate resistance of the Israelitish capital, threw off the Assyrian yoke. Shalmaneser proceeded thither with his army, and having gathered from the Phœnician sea-ports, which had remained loyal to his authority, a considerable fleet he surrounded the revolted city by land and water. The skillful sailors of Tyre, however, were more than a match for their assailants, and Shalmaneser, after a vigorous and protracted effort was obliged to abandon the siege. In withdrawing from the coast he contented himself with cutting off the water supply of the Tyrians by destroying the aqueducts in the rear of the city. For five years the people of Tyre saved themselves from perishing of thirst by gathering the rainfall into cisterns.

Meanwhile, in B. C. 722, a revolution occurred in Assyria by which Shalmaneser was ejected from the throne. His long absence in the Syrian war had given both cause and occasion for rebellion against his authority at home. Now it was that an obscure popular leader named SARGON, or Saru-Kina, appeared in Nineveh, and putting himself at the head of the revolutionary party, was proclaimed king. After a space—Shalmaneser not returning—the usurpation was accepted by the Ninevites, and the revolution became an accomplished fact.

Sargon at once began to make good his usurped title by military achievement. During the fifteen years of his reign he was constantly engaged in war. His first campaign was directed against Susiana, whose king, Humbanigas, had conspired with the now aged Merodach-Baladan, of Babylon, to declare independence of Assyria. These kings were defeated by Sargon, but before his success was complete he was called into Syria to determine the conditions on which the surrender of Samaria should be accepted. The city was deprived of its independence; an Assyrian governor was appointed and 27,280 of the inhabitants were carried into captivity beyond the Euphrates. The rest were left undisturbed on condition of the prompt payment of the annual tribute.

Scarcely had the affairs of Israel been settled until Sargon was called upon to suppress another Syrian revolt. This time the leader of the insurrection was Yahu-Bid, king of Hamath. This usurping ruler had persuaded the cities of the whole circumjacent region to join him in a league to resist the authority of the Assyrian monarch. An allied army was brought into the field and was met by Sargon at Karkar. Here a decisive battle was fought. The allies were defeated. Yahu-Bid was captured and his head cut off. The other leaders in the rebellion were likewise taken and put to death. Gaza, one of the dependencies of Egypt was next attacked, and the whole region to the Red Sea and Mediterranean subjected to the king's authority.

The invasion of Gaza brought into conflict for the first time the two great powers of Asia

and Africa—Assyria and Egypt. Shabak, the Ethiopian sovereign of Egypt, led out his army in defense of his province. Khanun, the king of Gaza, rallied what forces he could gather and joined his master to beat back the invading army. Sargon came on to the city of Raphia, and here was fought the great battle which decided for a while the mastery of the world. Assyrian valor and discipline prevailed. The Egyptian army was routed. Khanun, of Gaza, was captured and sent to Nineveh, and Shabak was obliged to save himself by flight. Sargon did not, however, for the present press his conquest further, but recrossing the Euphrates spent several years in quelling the half-civilized races that on the north and north-east of Assyria found refuge in the mountains, while ever and anon they broke out in predatory wars upon the rich and populous districts of their southern neighbors.

Before his northern campaigns were ended news came to Sargon that the Arab tribes of the Sinaitic peninsula were occupying their time by making inroads into his tributary and now defenseless kingdom of Israel. Setting out into Syria, the king soon brought an army against the marauders, whom he defeated, scattering some into the deserts of Arabia, and colonizing others in the waste places of Samaria. The presence of the great monarch in the West alarmed the kings of the neighboring nations, and they all, including the Pharaoh of Egypt, made a hasty submission, accompanied with tributes.

The next military expedition of Sargon was in B. C. 711. After the battle of Raphia, Ashdod, a city of Philistia, became a tributary of Assyria. The native prince of the city was Azuri, who presently revolted, and was thereupon deposed by the king. One Akhimit was appointed in his stead, but him the people rejected and chose a prince called Yaman to be their ruler. He too was a conspirator who soon seduced the cities of Philistia, and even Egypt, to join him in revolt. This led to a siege of Ashdod by the army of Sargon, who captured the city, seized the family of Yaman, sent them prisoners across the Euphrates, and chased the prince himself into Egypt. Shabak, alarmed at the prospect,



quickly made his peace by surrendering the fugitive, and sending humble apologies to the king. Over Ashdod an Assyrian governor was appointed, and the Western dependencies of Sargon were again reduced to quietude.

Meanwhile the condition of affairs in the South had become such as to demand the king's attention. Merodach-Baladan, ruler of Babylon, had flattered himself, after the withdrawal of Sargon's army in the first year of that monarch's reign, that no further danger of Assyrian domination was to be feared. This hope was greatly strengthened by the twelve years of independence which Babylonia had enjoyed while Sargon was absent in his Western and Northern wars. The king of Babylon had further fortified his desires by uniting in league with himself the king of Susiana, and the chiefs of the Aramæans, who occupied the banks of the Euphrates above the capital. Notwithstanding these preparations, when the army of Sargon marched southward, the courage of the Babylonian king oozed away; his allies mostly deserted him, and he himself sought refuge in the fortified town of Beth-Yakin. Hither he was followed by the Assyrian army. A battle was fought; the Babylonians were routed, the king was taken, and the city burned. Susiana was also quickly overrun, and the territory partly filled with colonies transported from the north of Assyria. It was the last serious insurrection in Babylonia previous to the overthrow of the Assyrian Empire. Henceforth the power and authority of the House of Nineveh were established along the shores of the Persian Gulf, and Chaldæa became an integral part of the dominant kingdom.

For two years Sargon held his court in Babylon, and while here received the extraordinary honor of embassies from distant islands of the seas. Upir, the king of Khareg, in the Persian Gulf, sent messengers to propitiate the great king; and far off Cyprus, "in the Sea of the Setting Sun," came by envoys from her seven kings to make offerings to him who had grown "as the goodly cedar, spreading his branches over the nations."

In general the northern expeditions of Sargon were much less successful than in the

South and West. The hardy mountaineers of Armenia, finding ever a ready refuge in the fastnesses of the hills, and inured by exposure and perilous conflicts with savage beasts, were a better match for the trained soldiery of Assyria than were the half-nomadic races of Syria and the effete battalions of Egypt. On the south-east Sargon's success was so distinct in his occasional conflicts with the Medes that a good part of their country was reduced to the condition of an Assyrian province. In order to retain his foothold the king established several fortified posts in the region which he had overrun, and imposed on the conquered districts a tribute to be paid in horses of the fine breeds native to Media.

The last war of Sargon—waged in the last year of his reign—was against the province of Illib, bordering on Susiana. In a dispute for the chieftainship of that country one of the claimants sent for aid to Nakhunta, king of Elam, and by him was promised assistance. The other claimant thereupon solicited help of Sargon, who gladly accepted this opportunity of interference in the affairs of the Elamites, and sending thither an army under his generals, defeated Nakhunta, and established the partisans of Assyria in power. But in the next year the king of Elam was successful, regained what he had lost, and even carried the war into the Assyrian territories.

It was during the reign of Sargon that the plan of keeping conquered countries in subjection by deportation of the people became a part of Eastern policy. The tribes of the northern regions, which were subdued by Sargon, were partly carried away and settled in Hamath and Damascus. Home colonies were occasionally organized and sent into districts which had been subdued by the Assyrian arms. The races of the Zagros who became subject to the great king were transferred in vast numbers to the towns on the Tigris, and many of the people of the more trustworthy Assyrian provinces were sent to districts which, like Samaria, were ever on the alert for some opportunity of revolt. It was the general policy of dispersing malcontents that led to the wholesale transportation of the Israelitish population into Mygdonia and other

regions beyond the Euphrates. By this means Sargon labored assiduously, and not without success, to diffuse the evil elements of his

with the most illustrious of the Assyrian kings. At Khorsabad he built for himself a palace which scarcely paled before the most

splendid structures of the Empire. Rather by the profusion of its ornamentation than by its size did the architecture of the epoch of Sargon surpass the work of previous builders. For his palace Sargon selected a site quite apart from other structures. The high platform was approached by flights of broad steps. Around the exterior of the building extended two series of elaborate sculptures, and above these the surface was covered with enameled bricks, arranged in beautiful patterns. About this magnificent palace as a center was built the "City of Sargon,"<sup>1</sup> in form a square, laid off with geometric regularity, one and a sixth miles on either side, capable of accommodating eighty thousand inhabitants. This city, strangely enough, was built remote from the Tigris, back at the foot-hills of the Zagros, where,



PALACE OF SARGON (RESTORED), WESTERN FAÇADE.

Empire, and to render homogeneous the diverse populations over which he was called to rule.

As a builder Sargon compared favorably

with mountain scenery in the background, cool air for the brow, and the water of

<sup>1</sup> The town of Khorsabad occupies, in whole or in part, the site of the ancient city *Dur-Sargina*.



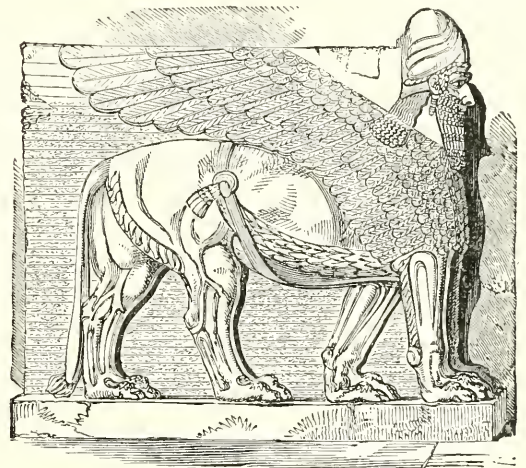
pure springs to quench his thirst, the king, no doubt, dreamed to spend the evening of his life. His former residence had been at Calah, where many improvements and repairs attested his public spirit. Likewise at Nineveh, and elsewhere throughout the Empire, are found the traces of his enterprise and genius. His reign of seventeen years was one of the most prosperous and successful for many generations, and was a fitting dawn for the rising day that was to follow.

SENNACHERIB, son and successor of Sargon, is generally reputed the most illustrious of the Assyrian kings. He is likewise, on account of the frequent mention of his name and deeds in the writings of the Jews, the best known of all the Eastern monarchs. He began his reign in B. C. 705, and held the throne for a period of twenty-four years. In the later times of the Assyrian monarchy, as in most old empires, the demise of the king was frequently attended with outbreaks and insurrections; for the malcontents were ever persuading themselves that the new king would prove a weakling, unable to maintain the prerogatives of his fathers. On the accession of Sennacherib a movement of this sort occurred in several of the provinces. Merodach-Baladan, the exiled king of Babylon, returned to the capital, murdered the viceroy Hagisa, and resumed the throne from which he had been driven in the first year of the reign of Sargon. For nearly two years Sennacherib was so much engrossed with the home affairs of the Empire that he found no time to punish the Babylonian revolutionists. In B. C. 703, however, he put himself at the head of his army and proceeded against the combined forces of Babylonians and Elamites, whom Merodach-Baladan had induced to support his claims.

The Assyrians gained an easy and complete victory, and the usurping king was glad to escape into Susiana. Sennacherib pressed on to Babylon, captured the city, and appointed the Assyrian general, Bilipni, as viceroy of the South. On his way back to Nineveh the great king devastated the country of the Aramæans and the neighboring nations on the Middle Euphrates, and returned to his

capital laden with booty, and driving a host of two hundred thousand captives, whom he colonized in different provinces of the Empire. Shortly afterwards the king made a brief campaign against those tribes of the Zagros in whose affairs Sargon had found occasion to interfere. Sennacherib deposed the governor whom his father had appointed, and set up in his stead another who was considered more worthy of trust.

In the next year, B. C. 701, the Assyrian monarch was called to the West. There Luliya, the king of Sidon, who had obtained authority over most of the cities of Phœnicia, raised the standard of revolt, and made a blustering preparation to meet Sennacherib in



WINGED LION, TIME OF SARGON.

the field; but on the approach of the latter the Sidonian filibuster escaped and fled to Cyprus. The hostile cities immediately submitted, and received in the place of Luliya an Assyrian prince, Tubal, as governor. Only Ascalon and four dependent towns gave Sennacherib trouble, and these places were soon reduced by siege.

Meanwhile, the city of Ekron, in Philistia, had revolted, expelled the Assyrian general Padi, and solicited the aid of Egypt. The Egyptian king, who was the Ethiopian Shabak II.—supported by his viceroys, the native princes of Egypt—espoused the cause of Ekron, and for the second time the great powers of Asia and Africa were brought to the arbitrament of battle. The Assyrian and Egypt-

tian armies met at a place called ELTEKEH, a Levitical city in the vicinity of Ekron. Here a great battle was fought, and the banners of Egypt again went down before the invincible soldiery of Assyria. Many trophies and vast spoils fell to the victors. Resistance ceased. Ekron was taken. The captive princes were killed, and their bodies, impaled on stakes, were made a spectacle outside the walls of the city. Padi, the expelled ruler of Ekron, was restored to his office, and Hezekiah, king of Judah, was thus embroiled in the conflict.

For the king of the Jews had been the keeper of Padi during his imprisonment. Thus was he confederated with the anti-Assyrian party, and accordingly Sennacherib turned against him in wrath. The "fenced cities" of Judah, forty-six in number, were taken and pillaged, and Hezekiah himself was, in the language of the Assyrian king, "shut up in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage."

When thus brought into a strait place, the Jewish monarch sent out messengers with princely presents, and bought a peace by the payment of eight hundred talents of silver, three hundred talents of gold, "and divers treasures, a rich and immense booty." In withdrawing from the country Sennacherib, in accordance with what had now become the settled policy of Assyria, carried with him into his own country out of the lands which he had subdued—chiefly the kingdom of Judah—more than two hundred thousand people, whom he colonized in various parts of the Empire. Hezekiah, in order to obtain the means of paying the heavy tribute which was imposed upon his nation, was obliged to despoil the temple of its treasures, even to the extent of stripping off the gold and silver with which the doors and pillars had been overlaid by the artificers of Solomon.

In the meantime, Bilipni, the Assyrian governor of Babylon, had proved false to his trust. The aged and ever-vigilant Merodach-Baladan returned into the country, and appealing to the native Chaldean nobles, once more fanned the embers of insurrection into a flame. Against these insurgents Sennacherib, almost immediately after his return from his wars in the West, proceeded with an army.

Merodach-Baladan and the Chaldean confederates were routed from the country, and the old revolutionist, fleeing from Babylonia, found refuge on an island in the Persian Gulf.

In the following year the attention of the Assyrian king was again drawn to the turbulent states bordering on the Mediterranean. Very soon after the previous withdrawal of Sennacherib from Palestine, Hezekiah, the king, chafing under the exactions of tribute, renewed negotiations with Egypt, and afterwards, believing himself secure in the prospect of an Egyptian alliance, wholly renounced his allegiance to Assyria. Sennacherib, having not much to fear from the petty king of Judah, and a great deal to fear from the immemorial prowess and renown of Egypt, determined to direct his efforts first against the Pharaoh and afterwards against the lesser foe. Therefore, leaving Palestine to the left, the Assyrian marched by the sea-coast route directly to the borders of Egypt, where he laid siege to Lachish, one of her tributary towns.

From this point he sent forward an embassy to Jerusalem, and straitly demanded reparation for the king's breach of faith. Hezekiah adopted a temporizing policy, and the embassy was sent a second time with demand for submission and threat of punishment; but the Jewish king had meanwhile been encouraged by the counsels and good cheer of Isaiah, the prophet, who declared that the Assyrian monarch should not come nigh Jerusalem, but should return into his own country by the way that he had come.

In the mean time Lachish had been invested and taken by Sennacherib, and also Libnah, from which place he advanced upon Egypt, and was confronted near the town of PELUSIUM by the Egyptian army under Seti, one of the native princes. It was the eve of a great battle, and the two armies lay facing each other by night, when a pestilential hot wind burst out of the desert and swept over the camp of the Assyrians. Dead men by thousands, smitten by this unexpected and viewless angel of destruction, strewed the earth. A doleful uproar broke out among the veteran soldiery of the East. The camp



was struck with a panic, and a spontaneous rout ensued, which was quickly aggravated by the hosts of Egypt pressing upon the flying legions of Assyria. Without further consideration of the affront of Hezekiah, the great king quickly withdrew his army, recrossed the Euphrates, and returned to Nineveh.<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the serious reverse which he had sustained, Sennacherib soon recovered himself and continued his military operations with unabated vigor. His fifth great campaign was directed against the mountaineers of the Upper Zagros, in the country north of Lake Van. The whole of this region, from Media to the borders of Cilicia, was overrun by his armies, but permanent conquest was impossible in such a land inhabited by such a people. Besides plundering the towns, gathering such booty as the hill-country afforded, and carrying away captive as many of the inhabitants as fell within his power, Sennacherib accomplished little in these northern wars.

A novel episode now occurred in the history of Assyria. The people of Beth-Yakin, the native town of the chronic rebel Merodach-Baladan, never satisfied with the domination of the North over their city, determined to expatriate themselves and establish a colony in Susiana. They accordingly took to sea with their gods and goods, and landing on the eastern shore of the Persian Gulf, laid the foundations of a new city. This depopulation of one of his provinces angered Sennacherib, and he immediately made preparations to reclaim the fugitives by force. Until this epoch the Assyrians had won no laurels on the sea. They were an inland people, and only by

<sup>1</sup>“And there passed not five and fifty days before two of his [Sennacherib’s] sons killed him, and they fled into the mountains of Ararath.”—Book of Tobit, I, 21.

“And this proved to be the conclusion of this Assyrian expedition against the people of Jerusalem. . . . At this time it was that the dominion of the Assyrians was overthrown by the Medes.”—Josephus: *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book X., chaps. 1, 2.

Both of these statements are grossly incorrect. Very far was Sennacherib from being killed within fifty-five days of his return to Nineveh; and the Empire of the Assyrians was not overthrown by the Medes until B. C. 625, seventy-four years after the discomfiture of the great king at Pelusium.

contact with Phœnicia—mistress of the Western waters—had they acquired any skill in the construction and management of ships. So notorious was the inaptitude of the nation for naval affairs that the king of Susa, who had received the refugee Babylonians into his dominions, hearing of the wrath of Assyria, never dreamed of danger from a hostile fleet, but made strenuous preparations to repel the expected invasion by land.

Sennacherib, however, keenly alive to the advantages of the situation, imported into his dominions an army of Phœnician ship-builders and marines, and hastily constructed on the Tigris a fleet of biremes, so formidable in appearance as to strike the Assyrians with amazement. As soon as his fleet was finished and equipped, Sennacherib dropped down the Tigris and crossed the Gulf in the wake of his fugitive subjects. Before either they or the Susianian king were aware of the approach of an enemy, the Assyrians invested the town. The place was taken almost without opposition. The refugees were hurried on board the fleet, and while the king of Susa was still awaiting an expected invasion of his dominions by land, the Assyrians with their train of captives, returned into Babylonia.

Meanwhile the Babylonians themselves, believing—and hoping—that the rash galleys of Assyria which had gone out into the open sea would never return, and that both Sennacherib and his fleet were by this time at the bottom, raised the standard of revolt and chose a certain Susub to be their king. The Susianian monarch also crossed over with an army into Babylonia, so that Sennacherib found himself between two foes—an army of Chaldean insurgents on the one side and an army of Elamites on the other. Both were disastrously defeated by the Assyrian king, who drove back with him to Nineveh a vast multitude of prisoners—a heterogeneous throng of Babylonians and Elamites, whom the monarch distributed as he would. Susub himself was led a captive to be gazed at by the Ninevites.

The next two expeditions of Sennacherib were directed against Susiana. The frequent encouragement and positive aid rendered by Nakhunta, the king of this country, to the

ever-insurrectionary Babylonians, furnished sufficient motive and excuse for an Assyrian invasion. Besides, two cities belonging to Assyria had been taken by the Elamites and were held by defiant garrisons. Against these Sennacherib directed the first movements of his campaigns. Both towns were taken, after which the Assyrian army marched into the interior, capturing and destroying no fewer than thirty-four large cities and a great number of less important places, devastating the country and carrying terror to both king and people. The former fled affrighted from his capital and sought refuge in a fortified town at the foot of the mountains. At this point in the campaign the home affairs of the Empire demanded the attention of Sennacherib, and he returned to Nineveh laden with spoils.

In the meantime, Susub, the Babylonian prisoner, escaped from the Assyrians, and returning to Chaldea was once more proclaimed king. He made the most vigorous preparations to defend himself against the inevitable, and even went so far in his desperation as to break open the great temple of Bel at Babylon and seize the sacred treasures, in order to buy the alliance of the king of Susiana in the approaching conflict. The aid thus sought was promptly given, and an Elamite army was quickly sent into Babylonia to support the insurgents. But it was all of no avail. The veteran army of Assyria was soon in the field; the allied host of the South was beaten down in the hard-fought battle of CHALULI and scattered to the winds. Babylon was entered and pillaged. The temples were ransacked, and the golden gods of the ancient ages were broken in pieces by a derisive soldiery.

The last campaign formally undertaken by the great Assyrian was against Cilicia. Here for the first time the armies of Asshur encountered the Greeks in battle. For a Greek fleet was guarding the Cilician coast at the time of the invasion, and this fleet the Phœnician navy of Sennacherib met and defeated. In the land contest, also, the Cilicians were overthrown. Then it was that the Assyrian king, in order to carry out his policy of peopling conquered provinces with the inhabi-

tants of other countries, founded the city of Tarsus, after the model of Babylon. For just as the latter city was divided by the Euphrates flowing through the midst, so Tarsus, cleft by the Cydnus, was divided into twain.

It appears that several years—near the close of his reign—were occupied by Sennacherib in this Cilician war. Whatever successes he may have gained during these aggressive movements in Asia Minor were, perhaps, counterbalanced by losses and insurrections on the south and east. The records of Babylon indicate that the last eight years of the reign of Sennacherib were coincident with an era of turbulence and misrule in the Southern provinces. It is not unlikely that the king was in his decline, and the vigor with which he was wont to chastise rebellious countries was no longer manifested in his administration. The Chaldeans, in common with the rest of the human race, had learned that liberties can be taken with the aged lion. It is clearly indicated that at the close of the great king's reign Babylon was once more in a state of semi-independence.

During the vicissitudes of his military campaigns, Sennacherib found time to distinguish himself and his epoch by splendid monuments. At the capital he built a great palace, surpassing in beauty and size any edifice hitherto erected in Assyria. The foundation, which was a vast platform raised about ninety feet above the plain, covered a space of more than eight acres. Within the palace were three great quadrangular courts.<sup>1</sup> The principal halls were the one one hundred and eighty feet, and the other one hundred and fifty feet in length, the width of each being above forty feet. Around these halls and courts galleries and apartments were arranged in an artistic manner. The whole number of rooms, besides the courts and halls, was about eighty, of which forty have been explored, and their dimensions and ornamentation ascertained.

In the matter of ornamentation the work of Sennacherib was distinguished from that

<sup>1</sup>The ground-plan shows that the main courts were respectively 154x125 feet; 124x90 feet; and 90x90 feet, in dimensions.



of his predecessors by its superior finish and the introduction of backgrounds in the sculptures. In the reliefs which adorn the halls and corridors of the great king's palace there is an elaboration and profusion of details which remind the beholder of the infinite particularity and realism displayed in the temples of Egypt. In Sennacherib's sculptures there is a constant conformity to the facts and a total absence of imagination, as if any departure from the real had been regarded by the sculptor as a crime against the laws of art.

The great works of Sennacherib's time were mostly produced by slave labor—that is, the labor of captives who were thrown into the cities of the Empire by the tides of conquest. Multitudes of Elamites, Jews, Arameans, Chaldeans, Cilicians, and Armenians had been added to the laboring population, and these were organized into companies and driven by task-masters to perform the chief part in rearing the prodigious structures which made Assyria famous.

Sennacherib may well be regarded as a typical warrior-king of ancient times. Among Assyrian monarchs he was perhaps the greatest. Considering the extent of his wars his success in the field was quite unparalleled. Except the disaster at Pelusium and the loss of Babylon in his old age, no single reverse checked the victorious progress of his arms. He possessed a degree of will and self-confidence not easily matched among the rulers of the ancient world; and when we consider the cares and burdens which he must have borne in the civil administration of so vast a government, and the versatile and original talents displayed in the architectural and industrial progress of the kingdom during his reign, we are struck with admiration at his tremendous activities and force of character.

After reigning for nearly a quarter of a century Sennacherib was assassinated by two of his sons. The eldest son, Asshur-Inadi-Su, who had been viceroy of Babylon, died before his father. Nergal, the second son, became heir-apparent to the throne; but Adrammelech and Sharezer, two other sons, fired with jealousy on account of their brother's prefer-

ment, conspired against their father's life and killed him while he was worshipping in the temple.<sup>1</sup>

For the moment the insurrection was nearly successful; for Nergal was driven out of the kingdom. But a reaction soon set in, and the people, shocked, perhaps, at the crime of the parricides, turned to ESAR-HADDON, a fifth son of Sennacherib, who was then in command of the army. As soon as the prince could march on the capital—for it was winter then, and the army was far from Nineveh—he was recognized as king, and expelling the assassins, who escaped into Armenia, began his reign in the spring of B. C. 681. He reigned for thirteen years, and like the kings, his ancestors, was principally engaged in the conduct of wars. At the first he put down some forces which were endeavoring to maintain the claims of the assassins of his father. In the next year he led an army into Phœnicia, where Abdi-Milkut, the king of Sidon, had raised a revolt and induced some of the neighboring rulers to join him. Esar-Haddon promptly suppressed the rebellion, and having captured the city, pursued the fugitive king to Cyprus, whither he had fled, and making him prisoner, put him to death.

An Assyrian governor was appointed over Sidon. Large numbers of her people were transported beyond the Euphrates, and their places were filled by Assyrian subjects taken from the provinces. The next expedition was into Armenia. Here the king captured the city of Arza, and carried away the inhabitants to labor upon the public works of Nineveh. In the following year his army was in Cilicia, where he overthrew a large force of insurgents, and took and destroyed twenty-one towns, with deportation of the people into Assyria.

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<sup>1</sup>In the commission of this crime we see the indubitable symptoms of the overthrow of the Empire. The dagger of the assassin was now at work in the palace. The sacred character of the king was no longer proof against that insane ambition which could not patiently abide the processes of nature. What the violence of foreign war could not accomplish in that it was weak, that the blasted affection of the son for the father stood ready to do by the atrocity of secret crime.

In the sixth year of his reign Esar-Haddon marched into Chaldea, where, for about fourteen years, civil affairs had been in a condition bordering on anarchy. One Nebo-Zirzi-Sidi—son of the old revolutionist, Merodach-Baladan—was now in authority at Babylon, holding the place of ruler with little or no respect to the wish of the Empire. A younger brother of this reigning prince, Nahid-Marduk by name, had meanwhile gone to Nineveh, where, pledging his own loyalty, he represented to Esar-Haddon the condition of affairs in Babylonia. The king gladly espoused the cause of Marduk, and overthrowing the power of the rebellious prince conferred the sovereignty on him who had professed loyalty.

The seventh campaign of Esar-Haddon was against Hazael, king of Edom. The capital city of this ruler was taken, and the Edomite gods were carried along with a captive train to Nineveh. The images, however, were soon afterwards sent back in answer to the prayer of Hazael, who was restored to authority and accepted as a subject of Assyria. Hazael should marry an Assyrian princess and pay an annual tribute of sixty-five camels. So there was peace in Edom.

The next expedition of Esar-Haddon was into a country beyond the Arabian desert. At least such is the statement of the Assyrian Canon. If the record be true, the campaign was a most extraordinary one, extending four hundred and ninety miles across a leafless, trackless, waterless waste of sand. That the Assyrian king was able to subsist a great army in such a region on such an expedition seems incredible. Esar-Haddon is said to have triumphed over this far-off country of Bazu. Laile, the king, escaped, but afterwards went in person to Nineveh to obtain by humility what he had been unable to secure by arms—a favorable peace for his people.

Shortly after this rather apocryphal episode, Esar-Haddon is found engaged in a war with the Aramæans, in the marsh-lands of the Euphrates. The Gambulu, one of the tribes, had neglected their tribute, and the king went thither to punish them; but the terrified chief sent in his submission and made haste to pay the tribute. Afterwards the Assyrian led his

army into the remote confines of Media, where a confederation of tribes was broken and some of the chiefs carried to Nineveh. This campaign completed the tenth year of Esar-Haddon's reign. The last and most important of all his wars was his conquest of Egypt.

Tirhakah was now the Pharaoh. His court was at Memphis. He belonged to that Ethiopian dynasty established by Shabak I. The Assyrian invasion was directed first against Memphis and afterwards Thebes. Both of these ancient capitals were taken, and Tirhakah was driven out of the country by the way that his ancestors had entered. All of Egypt between Thebes and the Mediterranean was conquered by the Assyrians. The country was divided into twenty provinces, and over each a governor was set, the whole being subject to the viceroy Necho, father of Psametik I. After reducing the country to an orderly administration, Esar-Haddon returned to his capital, where he inscribed himself on the entablature of his palace, "King of the kings of Egypt and conqueror of Ethiopia."

About this time occurred the rebellion of Manasseh, king of the Jews. The Assyrian generals were sent against him, and he was quickly overthrown. Being taken prisoner, he was conveyed in chains to Babylon. After a while, when his pride was broken, he was liberated by the king and restored to his dominions. In accordance with the custom of the times, the tribute laid on Judah was increased after the rebellion; and to make assurance doubly sure, a great train of colonists, gathered from Babylon, Susa, and even from Persia and other foreign regions, was turned into Palestine, until the immigrant population predominated over the native-born in Jewry.

At this juncture, 669 B. C., Esar-Haddon fell sick and resigned the crown of Assyria to his son, Asshur-Bani-Pal.<sup>1</sup> The enfeebled monarch retained for himself only the viceroyalty of Babylon, and retiring thither, passed at his southern capital the remaining year of his life. He died in 668, and ASSHUR-BANI-PAL became sole monarch of the Empire. His younger brother, Saul-Magina, was appointed to the viceroyalty of Babylon. The

<sup>1</sup>The *Sardanapalus* of the Greeks.



reign of the new king was ushered in by a war with Egypt. For as soon as Tirhakah, the expelled Pharaoh, heard that Esar-Haddon was powerless to punish him further, he headed back to Egypt, and driving out Necho and his band of Assyrian kinglets, restored the old *régime* as quickly as it had been instituted. Asshur-Bani-Pal hastily marched into Egypt, and encountering the Egyptian army at KAR-BANIT, gained a complete victory. Tirhakah fled at once from Memphis, and was pursued by the Assyrians to Thebes, and *through* Thebes into Ethiopia.

Tirhakah, when the Assyrian army had retired from the country, undertook to secure by intrigue what he was unable to achieve in battle. Several of Asshur-Bani-Pal's governors, including the viceroy Necho, were seduced from their allegiance and led into a conspiracy. This was discovered, and the conspirators were taken by the loyal princes and sent to Nineveh. But the rebellious party gradually gained the ascendancy, and Tirhakah, returning to Thebes, was reëstablished in the kingdom. Meanwhile Necho had pleaded for his life and liberty, and, being set free, was intrusted by the Assyrian king with the duty of restoring order in Egypt.

An army was intrusted to his command. Tirhakah was once more defeated, and flying from the country, perished in Ethiopia. His step-son, Urdamané, succeeded to the crown, and soon developed military talents superior to those of the late king. He carried on a campaign in Upper Egypt, took Thebes, and restored the Ethiopian dynasty to undisputed authority. Pursuing the Assyrians into Lower Egypt, he besieged Memphis, captured the city, and regained a complete supremacy over the whole country. Asshur-Bani-Pal, on hearing the news—for he was now in Assyria—returned with all haste, entered Egypt, put to flight the combined forces of the Egyptians and Ethiopians, chased them up the Nile valley and out of the land. He then sacked Thebes, and carried away a train of spoils such as had never before been taken from a city of the Pharaohs—gold, silver, gems, costly garments, priestly vessels and robes, ornaments of ebony garnished with precious

stones, obelisks, domestic animals, slaves, and hostages. Native Assyrian governors whose loyalty could not be doubted were then appointed in place of the deposed princes, and the king returned victorious to his own capital.

In the meantime a certain Baal, king of Tyre, had thrown off his allegiance and defied Assyria. Returning out of Egypt, Asshur-Bani-Pal attacked the insurgent city, subdued the king, and laid upon the people a still heavier tribute. A different motive drew the Assyrian monarch into Cilicia; for the king of this country had invited him thither and offered him his daughter in marriage. The offer was accepted, and the Cilician princess accompanied her lord to Nineveh.

Soon after these events Asshur-Bani-Pal made an expedition into Asia Minor, crossing the Taurus, and directing his campaign against several hitherto unknown provinces. After subduing these and returning to his capital, he was honored with an embassy from Gyges, king of Lydia, who sent in a voluntary submission on the part of himself and his country. Afterwards in a war which Gyges waged with the Cimmerians he was successful, and sent some of their chiefs as a curious present to the king of Assyria. The next invasion by the monarch was into the mountainous country surrounding Lake Van. Aksheri, king of the tribes in this region, was defeated by the Assyrians and put to death by his own subjects. His son Vohaln quickly made peace with the Empire on the condition of paying a heavy annual tribute.

A new complication now arose in a different quarter. Some Susianian tribes, being hard pressed by famine, obtained permission to remove within the borders of the Empire. As soon, however, as plenty returned, the immigrants wearied of their new surroundings and desired to return into Susiana. This was refused, and Urtaki, the king of the Susianians, thereupon *demand*ed that his subjects be liberated. Hostile movements followed on both sides. The cause of Susiana was espoused by the Aramæans; but Asshur-Bani-Pal quickly marched into the country of his antagonist, defeated his army, and took him prisoner. Urtaki soon died, and his brother

Umman-Aldas, who had been in exile on account of his friendship for the Assyrians, was restored to his country and the throne. After his death, however, his sons were excluded from the kingdom by their uncle, who was of the anti-Assyrian party. The princes fled to Nineveh, and Asshur-Bani-Pal found it necessary to undertake their restoration.

The usurper of Susiana made prodigious efforts to save himself, drawing several adjacent nations, including Babylonia, into an alliance against the Assyrian monarch. But the latter was again easily victorious. The allied army was defeated in battle; the king was taken and put to death, and his head nailed up over the gate of Nineveh. The two young Susianian princes returned under the protection of Asshur-Bani-Pal, and to each was given a half of the kingdom. The rebel princes were well-nigh exterminated. Some had their tongues cut out; others were beheaded.

But the spirit of rebellion was not at all extinguished. Saül-Mugina, the deposed king of Babylonia, fomented an insurrection, and induced several surrounding states to join him. Even one of the princes of Susiana, whom Asshur-Bani-Pal had recently restored to power, was bribed to break his allegiance and join the revolt. The other brother, however, remained loyal to the king, who had conferred the right to rule, and so raising an army, he attacked his brother, most of whose forces were absent in Babylonia, and defeated and killed him. For this he was rewarded by Asshur-Bani-Pal with the undivided sovereignty of Elam.

But this merited honor he did not long retain, for the army in Babylonia would not follow his lead; and in the meantime, Inda-Bigas, a chieftain who ruled the mountaineers of Luristan, led a counter revolution, and placing himself on the throne compelled Tamarit—for that was the name of the Susianian king—to fly for his life. Saül-Mugina also was attacked by his brother, acting in the Assyrian interest, and thus the rebellion was brought to nought. Asshur-Bani-Pal overran the country, captured the towns one by one, and extinguished the last sparks of opposition. Saül-Mugina was taken and burnt to death.

Several years of quiet followed; but the elements of sedition were constantly working in Susiana. There was an Assyrian party and an anti-Assyrian party. By and by, the success of the latter was so marked that in B. C. 645, Asshur-Bani-Pal again entered the country and captured twenty-six of the principal cities, including Susa. Western Elam was thus brought completely under the domination of Assyria, while Eastern Elam remained to the opposing party. Not long, however, was even this status maintained. A fresh insurrection once more called the Assyrian king into the country, which he now entered in extreme wrath. Fighting his way victoriously to Susa, the capital, he took the city by assault, and for the space of twenty-three days gave it up to the rage of his soldiers. An edict was issued abolishing Susianian independence, and the whole country was formally annexed to Assyria as one of the provinces of the Empire.

The hard work given to the Assyrian army, for the space of twelve years, by these Elamitic wars lent encouragement to political discontent in the West. Psametik of Egypt made a dash for independence. Gyges, king of Lydia, for some time the voluntary subject of Assyria; hearing of the Egyptian outbreak, sent aid to Psametik, and broke with Asshur-Bani-Pal. Scarcely, however, had he done so when the savage Cimmerians, whom he had recently subdued, burst in upon his kingdom, overran the whole country, defeated the king's army, and put him to death. Ardys, his successor, hastened to make peace with Assyria, and the revolt was at an end.

The last of Asshur-Bani-Pal's foreign expeditions was directed against those Arabs of the desert who had aided the Babylonians in their recent rebellion. Several of the wild tribes allied themselves to resist the power which they had provoked, and a desultory warfare was waged over a wide district of country. That part of the waste region lying between the Persian Gulf and Syria was overrun by the Assyrian army. Damascus, Petra, and the towns of Moab were taken by the king; and in the Damascus mountains, at a place called KHUKHURUNA, a decisive battle



was fought, in which the Arabs were disastrously routed. The two chiefs who had been conspicuous in furnishing aid to Babylon were captured, taken to Nineveh, and beheaded.

During the latter years of Asshur-Bani-Pal's reign, Assyria suffered a decline from which she never recovered—a decadence attributable in part to the internal forces of dissolution which were at work in the Empire, and in part to external violence. It was between the years 634 and 626 B. C. that Assyria began to feel the effect of hostile demonstrations from without, and to realize in her own experience the difference between invader and invaded. The same treatment which she for so many centuries had visited upon surrounding nations was now to be remeasured to her in her own cup.

For in the mean time the kingdom of Media, on the south-east mountain skirt of the Empire, had grown into a vigorous and warlike life. The native forces of nationality had here received a remarkable development, and immigration from the East had both contributed to the population and made versatile the genius of the Medes. Several times in their foreign wars the kings of Assyria had struck the Median soldiery, and not a few wrongs had been done by the Ninevite dynasty to the rising kingdom beyond the south-eastern mountain chain. The effect of these acts had been to arouse the animosity of the Medes, and they only waited until their power should come, to be avenged upon their great enemy.

In the year B. C. 634, the king of the Medes felt himself strong enough to begin the conflict. With a well equipped army he invaded Assyria and offered battle to Asshur-Bani-Pal in his own dominions. The gauge thus thrown down was accepted by the haughty monarch, and the Median king was utterly routed. His army was cut to pieces and himself left among the slain. The effect of this rout, however, was rather to enrage than to terrify the Medes, whose spirit rose with the conflict, and whose immediate note of preparation for renewal of the struggle sounded through the land. It was at this juncture of affairs that a new peril, unseen, undreaded alike by Media and Assyria,

flung an ominous shadow over all of South-western Asia.

For now it was that the barbarous SCYTHIANS swarming in the steppes of the North, attracted by chance perhaps to the sunny plains and fruitful fields of the Southern nations, began to pour through the mountain passes and devastate the country. It was a consuming horde of ravenous semi-savages, more savage than savagery, that settled upon every green shrub of civilization, and, locust-like, devoured both leafage and fruit. The organization of the race was tribal. One "Head Tribe" had a kind of loose supremacy of the rest. The chief pursuit was that of herdsmen and soldiers. Huge droves of half-wild cattle were followed from steppe to steppe by the nomadic barbarians, who slaughtered when they would, gorged themselves with blood and flesh, and grew ferocious as the beasts that raven.<sup>1</sup>

It was this prodigious race of savages that, while the Medes were preparing for a second invasion of Assyria, burst through the passes of the North and poured into the Median fields. Devastation and ruin followed in their wake. Whatever was destructible perished. The inhabitants either fled for refuge to the fortified towns or were cut down wherever overtaken with the short swords of the barbarians. All of Upper Media was trodden under foot of the Scythian host, on whose ferocity neither the weakness of woman nor the helplessness of age left any softening trace. Some of the towns were besieged and starved into submission, and in such cases the inhabitants were given up to merciless butchery.

<sup>1</sup>Many are the cheerful descriptions drawn by the Greek historians of this gentle breed of savages. Herodotus and Hippocrates were evidently struck with the sterling, though somewhat stalwart, virtues of the race. They describe the Scythians as creatures with overgrown and beastly bodies; covered with coarse hair; gross and fat; loose jointed; abdomens protruding like pots; unwashed and filthy; smeared with paste; stuffing themselves with cheese and the sour milk of mares; hanging their slain enemies' scalps to their bridle reins, and lapping the blood while hot; using human skulls for drinking bowls; and snoring in the dirt and ashes under rude tents of felt or among the rubbish of their carts. The Scythian armor, besides the bow and arrow, consisted of shield and spear and battle-axe.

In other places the supplies were abundant, and when the patience of the barbarians was exhausted they passed on to ravage other districts.

Although Media and Iberia were the first countries to feel the shock of the Scythian invasion, the ravages of the horde were by no means confined to these states. The savage tide rolled on into Mesopotamia and Armenia, and then swept westward and south-westward into Syria and Palestine. Assyria—especially the better portion between the Zagros and the Tigris—was completely devastated. The energies of the Empire had, no doubt, flagged as the vigor and will of Asshur-Bani-Pal went out in old age. Assyria had so long enjoyed immunity from invasion—had so little imagined it a possible thing for any nation to enter her dominions—that many towns and even great cities were built without special reference to defense. Into these the Scythian hosts poured without a check. The accumulated treasures of ages melted away before them. Blood flowed in the streets where the shout of an enemy had never before been heard. Palaces were sacked and given to the torch, and all who were not butchered outright were scattered in terror to the hills.

Of all the countries trodden under foot by the barbarians, the rich and luxurious but now decrepit Assyria suffered the most terrible disasters. It was a blow from which she never recovered. On the west the effect of the invasion, spreading and diffusing itself like a flood of waters, was less seriously felt. Syria soon recovered herself and continued as before. Psametik, of Egypt, met the Scythians on the confines of his kingdom and purchased exemption.

In the course of time, however, the barbarian deluge subsided and the dry ground appeared. According to Herodotus, the savages held the mastery of Western Asia for twenty-eight years. After a time they receded, and most of the nations which had fallen under their sway regained their freedom. In Media, especially, was the power of recuperation manifested. The people were warlike; the country was hilly; most of the towns were fortified. The barbarian progress—especially in Lower

Media—had thus been impeded; and as soon as the swarm had in some measure disappeared, the Medes turned upon the remaining savages and expelled them. Then, with great vigor, the damage done was repaired; and while Assyria, whose very opulence was proving her ruin, still nourished the gluttonous brood at her breast, Media recovered her strength, and made ready to finish in Mesopotamia the work which the Scythic horde had so fearfully begun. Such was the course of events between the first and the second invasion of the Assyrian Empire by the Medes.

The aged Asshur-Bani-Pal made some efforts to restore and reorganize his kingdom. In this work, however, he was cut short by death. In the year 626 B. C. the great king died, and was succeeded by his son, ASSHUR-EMIDILIX, more generally known by his Greek name of SARACUS. It is here, moreover, that the confusion of the Western historians regarding the last years of the Assyrian Empire, begins. By them the character and deeds of Saracus, who was a voluptuary, without spirit or enterprise, were transferred to Asshur-Bani-Pal—Sardanapalus—from which it has happened that the latter, one of the greatest of the warrior-kings of Assyria, has generally borne the reputation of an effeminate Oriental, who went about his palace dressed in woman's apparel, feasting in his seraglio, sleeping the sleep of the glutton. The confusion has extended still further, making Sardanapalus to be the last king of Assyria, him whom Cyaxares destroyed amid the ruins of the Empire. The Assyrian records have now made it clear that to the voluptuary Saracus belongs the discredit of being extinguished in the ruins of his palace and kingdom.

This prince came to the throne in 626. He began his brief and inglorious reign at Nineveh. Preferring Calah as a capital, he laid, in that city, the foundations of a palace which, in its diminished proportions, was but a caricature of the grand works of his father and grandfather.<sup>1</sup> But it was not reserved

<sup>1</sup> Esar-Haddon's conquest of Egypt made him familiar with the famous architecture of that country. He carried home with him from Thebes some of her guardian sphinxes, and the traces of Egypt-





DEATH OF SARACUS.



for Saracus to be either builder or king. The handwriting was already on the wall, and the fiat was gone forth. Cyaxares, king of the Medes, was already gathering and equipping an army for a renewal of the war which had been so long interrupted by the coming of the Scythians. He drew into an alliance with himself the Susianians, the ancient and inveterate foes of Assyria, and in B. C. 627, a few months before the accession of Saracus, was ready to begin the war. The plan of the campaign involved a double invasion of the Empire. The army of Susiana was to march from the south, while Cyaxares himself, with the Medes, was to enter the country from the east.

To resist the enemy Saracus made such preparations as the enfeebled state of the kingdom would permit. To meet the double invasion which was threatened he divided his army, and appointed the general Nabopolassar to command one of the divisions. To him was intrusted the work of repelling the Susianians, who were expected to enter the country on the side of Babylonia, while the king himself was to face Cyaxares. From the beginning the Assyrian cause was beset with disaster. Nabopolassar betrayed his king and country. Between him and Cyaxares negotiations were opened, and, on condition that the Median king would give his daughter in marriage to Nebuchadnezzar, the oldest son of Nabopolassar, the latter agreed to go over to the Medes and join in the invasion of Assyria.

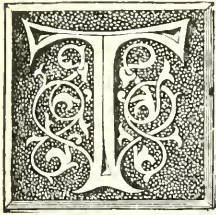
tian influence are noticeable from this time forth in the royal buildings of Assyria. Esar-Iladdon's great palace at Calah—one of the most splendid of all the kingly edifices—bore in many parts the touch of the Egyptian. The grand doorway leading to the inner chamber of the palace was guarded by colossal sphinxes and lions after the manner of the temples of Egypt. The palace of Asshur-Bani-Pal at Koyunjik was also touched with this foreign influence; and it was more than likely that that monarch's taste for literature, of which he and his scribes were the greatest lights of the Empire, was in like manner traceable to an inspiration caught in Egyptian campaigns.

The defection was fatal. The spirit of Saracus and of those who still supported his cause was broken; and before the combined army of Medes, Susianians, Babylonians, and disloyal Assyrians under Nabopolassar, Saracus fell back to Nineveh, and entered her gates to go out no more. It was now 625 B. C. The city was at once invested. The siege was pressed with ever-increasing vigor, and despair settled like a pall over the proud metropolis which had so long been the terror of the nations. Saracus was unequal to the great emergency which was upon him and his people. The last day of Assyrian greatness drew into twilight. The river conspired with fate to overthrow the defenses of the city. The tramp of the Median soldiers was heard in the streets. The inhabitants, who had never before beheld a foreign foe except as trembling captives, fled in dismay before the fiery Medes. The king hastily entered his palace, ordered the slaves to heap the sacred things into a funeral pyre, and mounting to the summit with his wives and servants, applied the torch and perished in the flames. His ashes lay white upon the marble floor, mingled with the ashes of the Assyrian Empire. A new power had arisen beyond the mountains to take the place of the colossal fabric reared by the genius of Shalmaneser and Tiglath-Adar. Another race had come into the ascendant, and the glory and greatness of the Assyrians were shrouded in everlasting night.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lord Byron, in his tragedy of *Sardanapalus*, has given a most vivid picture of the closing scenes of the Empire. Following Diodorus and Ctesias, the great poet has committed the usual error of confounding Saracus with Asshur-Bani-Pal, attributing to the latter the vices and follies of the former; and to this is added the geographical absurdity of making the battlements of Nineveh to be washed down by a flood in the *Euphrates*! Indeed, throughout the whole drama the Assyrian capital is placed on the banks of the Euphrates, instead of those of the Tigris. Nevertheless, the tragedy is an imperishable, though highly poetic, account of the sunset of Assyrian glory.



## CHAPTER XIV.—RELIGION AND ART.



THE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM of the Assyrians was well-nigh identical with that of the Chaldeans, from whom it was borrowed. When the colonists that founded Asshur went forth from the low-lying plains of the South, they carried with them the cycle of ideas which the fish-god, coming up from the sea, had taught them. In both countries the external forms of religion were alike. The temples, the altars, the sacred offices of Calah and Nineveh, were a transcript of those of Borsippa and Babylon. And, subjectively considered, the religious theories and beliefs of Assyria were of the same warp and woof with those which had immemorially prevailed on the Lower Euphrates and the borders of the Gulf.

So far as the objects of Assyrian worship were concerned, they were a group of gods of various degrees of importance. There was not sufficient unity in the system to warrant the use of the term monotheistic as descriptive of its character. The deities rose the one above another, but none so high as to be regarded as by preëminence the supreme god of Assyria. Each had his own sphere, within the limits of which his godhood was unquestioned and unquestionable. It was the difference in the elevation of the sphere by which these divine activities were circumscribed that determined the rank and honor of the respective gods in the Ninevite pantheon.

To the general rule of identity between the deities of Upper and Lower Mesopotamia there was one notable exception. ASSHUR, the special god of the Assyrian Empire, was unknown in the South. He was the tutelary deity of the race. To him both kings and people looked as the peculiar guardian of the city, the court, the nation. His praise was sounded through all the inscriptions, and the prayer of the priest always began with an appeal to Asshur. Thirteen kings of the line of

Nimrod bore the name of this deity—and the name was identical with that of the country: so that the highest patriotism and the most fervid religious zeal found at the beginning of their quest a common fountain of inspiration: to the one he was the hero Asshur, the son of Shem; to the other, the god Asshur, lord of the Assyrian race. Asshur was worshiped as the King of the Gods. He was the Destroyer of the Enemy and the Giver of Victory. When the colonists waxed strong in the upper country they called their earliest capital Asshur; therefore was he the Founder of Cities. The enemies and servants of the Assyrians were the enemies and servants of Asshur, and to him was due the ascendancy of the race over the barbarians. So general and wide-spread was the adoration of this deity that his worship was never localized; nor does it appear that a temple was ever built in his honor. It was to the lesser gods that the greater fanes were reared.

There can be little doubt that the myth of Asshur was based on the founding of the race by Asshur, the son of Shem. He, like Romulus, passed by apotheosis from earthly fame to divine honors. In this can be seen, also, the reason for the worship of the Assyrian kings. They were god-born. They were the offspring of Nimrod—of Asshur. Like his ancestors, the monarch of Assyria was one of the immortals, whom to injure or neglect was to offend against the most high powers of heaven and earth.

The emblem of Asshur was the winged globe. From the midst of the circle issues a royal figure, crowned, bearing the bow, or extending his hand in authority. Sometimes the divine effigy is seen drawing the bow against the enemy, and sometimes only the hands of the unseen god are lifted from the disk. In a few cases two other royal heads, one on either side of the true deity, are seen emerging from the outspread wings; but the figure of Asshur is generally singular—alone.

The divine emblem is profusely employed in all the Assyrian sculptures, and is, indeed, their distinguishing characteristic. Besides this, however, there is another—the sacred tree—which, like the winged circle, is much employed as an emblem of Asshur. From between the horns of a ram the trunk mounts as a palm, and spreads in symmetrical branches, or is laden with cones after the manner of the fir-tree.

Next after the almost universal adoration of Asshur was the worship of those Chaldean deities whose titles and attributes have already been given in a previous chapter.<sup>1</sup> The principal names included in this list are Anu-and-Vul, Bel, Sin, Shamas, Vul, Nin, and Nergal. After these were the goddesses Ish-tar, Beltis, and Gula, and in later times, Hea, Nebo, and Merodach. Only Anu-and-Vul were deities whose worship was coincident with the founding of the Empire. The rest were of more recent date, having come into the Assyrian Pantheon about the times of Asshur-Dayān II. The general theory of the godhead of these deities was so nearly the same in Assyria and in the South that only occasional variations from the primitive Chaldean type are to be noted in the religious beliefs of the Assyrians.

The worship of Anu-and-Vul was introduced from Chaldea into Assyria long before the latter became an independent kingdom. It is thought that Shamas-Vul, the son of Ismi-Dagon of Chaldea, set up a shrine in Asshur and dedicated it to ANU before Assyria had grown into any distinct importance. This old temple was for a long time a landmark, then fell into decay, was demolished by Asshur-Dayān I., and afterwards rebuilt by Tiglath-Pileser. There was no other important temple of Anu in all Assyria; the worship of this deity was never popular, and hardly practiced beyond the limits of Asshur.

Many of the inscriptions and invocations which enumerate the gods of Assyria omit Anu altogether, and the word is not employed as a part of any royal name. Nevertheless, when Anu is mentioned, as in the prayer of Tiglath-Pileser I., the name stands second in

the list of the divinities invoked. The other Assyrian monarchs who seem to have looked with most favor on Anu's worship were Asshur-Izir-Pal and Sargon. The place of Anu among the gods of the Empire was neither definite nor conspicuous.

The third deity of the Assyrians was BEL, the classical Belus. The principal seat of his worship was at Nineveh, which was frequently designated as "the City of Belus." The monarchs of the Empire sometimes addressed their subjects as "the People of Belus;" and as many as three of the earlier sovereigns bore his name. In those invocations—not a few—from which the name of Anu is omitted, that of Bel stands next to Asshur; and there is everywhere evidence in the inscriptions of the high honor in which this deity was held by the nation. The introduction of his worship was almost contemporaneous with the founding of the Early Kingdom; and Bel-Sumili-Kapi, first of the traditional kings, bore the name of this renowned deity. It appears that, among the later monarchs, Sargon looked with especial favor upon the worship of Bel. One of the gates of Dur-Sargina was dedicated by this king to his favorite divinity and to Beltis, his queen. The emblem of Bel most used in the sculptures was the horned cap, which, besides being a general emblem of divinity, was peculiarly appropriated by the third of the Assyrian deities. He was held in great honor by the nobles and princes of the Empire who rarely, if ever, omitted from their prayers, edicts, and inscriptions the distinguished name of "the Warrior Bel."

The fourth Assyrian divinity, already mentioned in connection with the Chaldean Pantheon, was HEA. He was the god of the human mind, having dominion over the senses, the intellect, the feelings. The concept of such a deity was rather too spiritual for the materialistic disposition of the people, and the worship of Hea was neither popular nor splendid. A few temples were erected in his honor,<sup>1</sup> and one of the principal gates of Dur-Sargina bore his name. Sennacherib, on his

<sup>1</sup> The ruins of two—one at Asshur and the other at Calah—have been discovered and partly explored.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter X, pp. 132-140.



Susianian expedition, stopped on the sea-shore to make an offering of a golden boat; for how should an army be carried across the untried deep unless Wisdom should direct and guide? Hea's symbol was a serpent—an image but infrequently found among the sculptures of Assyria. This, added to the fact that the name of Hea was not employed as a part of royal titles and but seldom used in invocations, is another proof of the unpopularity of his worship.

The Moon-god *SIN* stood at the head of the planetary deities of Assyria. His rank and attributes were not greatly different from those of his Chaldean counterpart. The crescent moon, which was the emblem of *Sin*, is perhaps the most common of all the divine symbols found among the Assyrian sculptures; and here again we see the predominance of Southern influences in the fundamental religious beliefs of this great people. *Sin* was recognized as the oldest of the gods, and when the Assyrians desired to express their thought of the beginning of things they said, "from the origin of the god *Sin*." Two great temples dating from the reign of Sargon, the first to *Sin* and *Shamas* at that monarch's favorite city, and the other to *Sin* alone at *Calah*, marked the esteem in which the Moon-god's worship was held in the later times of the Empire; and when Sargon sought a name for his son, afterwards so greatly distinguished, he said *Sin-Akhi-Irib* (Sennacherib), "*Sin* multiplies brethren."

As in Chaldæa, so in Assyria the divinity of the moon outranked the Sun-god, *SHAMAS*. But the worship of the latter was exceedingly popular, and but for the Chaldean dogma of the precedence of *Sin*, would perhaps have stood next in importance to that of *Hea* and *Bel*. There are instances, indeed, in which the name of *Shamas* is placed in invocations next to that of *Asshur*, and in a few cases the emblem of the latter is blazoned in the center with the four-rayed orb, which is the symbol of the former.

With most of the monarchs *Shamas* was held in favor. To him Tiglath-Pileser ascribes his right to be ruler of the people; and to him *Asshur-Izir-Pal* gives the honor of his

victories. The great north gate of *Dur-Sargina* was dedicated by Sargon to *Shamas* with the high rank of third among the gods of Assyria; and by Sennacherib and Esar-Haddon he is placed, in their lists of deities, next to *Asshur* himself. The emblem of *Shamas* is generally associated in the sculptures with that of *Sin*, the sun being placed to the left of or below the moon. At least two of the monarchs of the Empire took the name of *Shamas* as a part of their own.

One of the most primitive forms of Assyrian worship was that of the god *VUL*. This deity, like most of the others, was introduced into Upper Mesopotamia by the immigrants who peopled the country in the times of the early kingdom. His attributes have never been clearly discriminated from those of several other divinities with whom he was generally joined in worship. Perhaps his original Chaldean character was but little changed by the transfer to the North, while his uncertain rank was attributable to the growing preference of the Assyrians for more favored deities. Several of the kings, however, bear the divine name of *Vul*, and his temples at *Asshur* and *Calah* give evidence of the devotion of both sovereigns and people to this ancient god of the Chaldeans.

In the old-time, half-traditional history of the Assyrians—fathered and perpetuated by the Greeks, and by them transmitted to the Western nations—the race was said to have been founded by *NINUS*. He was to Nineveh what *Romulus* was to Rome. The Assyrian Canon has dispelled most of the legend which Herodotus, Ctesias, and Diodorus recited as early Assyrian history; and what remains is to the effect that the god *NIN*, or *NINIP*, the Assyrian Mars, first of the second group of the deities of *Asshur*, is he after whom the mighty city was named. As such he was esteemed and worshiped by the great kings of the early line.

Tiglath-Pileser I. designates this god *Nin* as his guardian; *Asshur-Izir-Pal* builds him a splendid temple; Sargon dedicates to him a city. The winged bulls—which so abound in Assyrian architecture as the guardians of gateways, porches, and courts—are emblems of the

mighty Nin, who was the sharpener of the weapons of war, and the protector of mankind in peace. Sennacherib and the great monarchs of the later line, chief builders and promoters of Assyrian glory, made the name of Nin a constant repetition, while doorway and palace-hall witnessed how the best of Assyrian art was consecrated to his honor. Three of the kings bore the name of Nin<sup>1</sup> as a part of their royal appellations, and the principal temple of Calah—long time the capital of the Empire—was dedicated to his worship.

In the later periods of Assyrian history the Chaldean or Babylonian MERODACH was given a place among the principal deities of the nation. The campaigns of Vul-Lush III. appear to have been the origin of this modification in the previous theology. The introduction of the Southern god into the Pantheon of the North was regarded with much favor by subsequent monarchs, but continuous war, with approaching decline, and perhaps some national antipathy to innovation, prevented the erection of temples to Merodach, and his worship was consequently limited to associated ceremonies at the shrines and altars of other gods. His name, which was much used by the Babylonian kings as an element of the royal title, does not appear as an appellative of any Assyrian monarch, though it seems that Merodach was a common name among the nobility.

According to the tradition of the great kings of the Later Empire, their family was descended through three hundred and fifty generations from the god NERGAL, the Hercules of Assyrian theology. His symbol was the winged lion, and the multitude of sculptures in which this figure is dominant gives abundant proof of the high esteem in which this deity was held by the dignitaries of the royal household. The winged lion and the winged bull, emblems of Nergal and Nin, were the principal figures in most of the palace sculpture, and the two gods thus symbolized, being the tutelary deities of hunting and war, were evidently worshiped with great enthusiasm by the kings who found in those pursuits their chief avenues to amusement and glory. It

thus happened that Nin and Nergal, though nominally inferior to the high gods Anu and Bel, had really a stronger hold on the royal favor than did those deities who presided over less fascinating pursuits.

The god NEBO was, like Merodach, a Chaldean importation. The wars of Vul-Lush III. against Babylonia brought back to Nineveh, as a part of their results, the theological notions of the priests of Babylon. The Assyrian kings, after plundering with sacrilegious hands the temples of the South, still had a lingering fear of the deities whose images they had pulled down and carried away. And so, with the usual philosophy of robbers, they undertook to worship the gods and keep the goods. It thus happened that some of the later despoilers of the Babylonian temples became the most assiduous propagandists of the Babylonian faith. To this trait of human weakness is traceable the introduction of the worship of the Chaldean Nebo at Calah and other great cities of the Empire.

Such were the gods of the Assyrian race. With these certain goddesses were paired, in a manner analogous to the mysticism of Egypt. The male deity was rarely if ever worshiped alone. As the female principle stands in nature universally correlated with the male, as the mother of life, so in the Assyrian Pantheon the goddess was always set over against her lord. Thus, with Asshur, the tutelary deity of the race, was joined SHERUHA, his queen, the Mistress of the Skies.<sup>1</sup> In like manner, ANUTA was the female Anu, and BELTIS the female Bel. The queen of Hea was called DAV-KINA, and the wife of the Moon-god Sin was known simply by her title of "The Great Lady." The name of the Sun-goddess, queen of Shamas, was GULA, and the spouse of the god Vul was called SHULA. Nin's wife was worshiped together with her lord, under the title of "Queen of the Land;" and the consort of the Babylonian

<sup>1</sup> With Asshur and his worship was also associated the famous goddess ISHTAR, the Assyrian Venus. The mythology is here a little obscure, but it appears that in the later times of the Empire it was Ishtar rather than Sheruha who was regarded as the true queen and consort of the great and powerful Asshur.

<sup>1</sup> Nin is, as already stated, the same as Adar.



Merodach was named ZIR-BANIT. Nergal had for his wife the goddess LAZ, and the spouse of Nebo was known by the name of WARMITA.

Of these female divinities some were in great favor; others were less esteemed. Generally, they were adored in the same temples with their lords. Sometimes, however, special shrines were consecrated, and in a few instances temples reared, to the favorite goddesses of Assyria. Such was the magnificent edifice which Asshur-Bani-Pal dedicated to Beltis at Nineveh; and such were the splendid temples of Gula at Asshur and Calah. It was for the worship of Ishtar that Tiglath-Pileser I. repaired and rededicated the great fane at Asshur, the primitive capital; and to her also was reared one of the most splendid temples in Nineveh.

It thus appears that the deities of the Assyrians were divided into four groups, the first embracing only Asshur and his queen; the second constituting the First Triad—Anu, Bel, and Hea; the third group being the Second Triad, the planetary gods, Sin, Shamas, and Vul; and the fourth embracing the four minor divinities—Nin, Merodach, Nergal, and Nebo. The mythological scheme may thus be presented in tabular form:

DEITIES OF THE ASSYRIANS I

GODS.	CORRESPONDING GODDESSES.	CHIEF SEAT OF WORSHIP.
Asshur.....	Sheruha and Ishtar.....	Throughout the Empire.
FIRST TRIAD.	Anu.....	Asshur.
	Bel.....	Asshur and Calah.
	Hea.....	Asshur and Calah.
SECOND TRIAD.	Sin.....	Calah and Bit-Sargina.
	Shamas.....	Bit-Sargina.
	Vul.....	Asshur and Calah.
Nin.....	"The Great Lady".....	Calah and Nineveh.
Merodach.....	Zir-Banit.....	
Nergal.....	Laz.....	Tarbisi.
Nebo.....	Warmita.....	Calah.

Besides the deities who held dominion over man and nature, the Assyrians recognized the existence of spirits less exalted and powerful. As some of the powers of nature seemed to be exerted for the benefit of the human race,

and some for its destruction, so the spirits were classified into benevolent and malicious. There were good genii and evil. The GOOD GENIUS was generally figured as a winged man with benignant visage. Such a figure is seen in the sculptures accompanying the king as he goes to offer sacrifice at the altar. The winged visitant wears on his head the horned cap, emblem of divinity, and bears in his right hand the pomegranate, or the cone of the pine-tree, symbols of fecundity and abundance. In his left hand the Good Genius carries the sacred basket, in which are stored the benefits and blessings which the immortals bestow on men—a divine cornucopia filled with the benevolence of the gods. Sometimes the Good Genius has the head and visage of a falcon, after the manner of the hawk-headed Horus or Thoth of the Egyptians.

The EVIL GENIUS is sometimes savage, sometimes grotesque. Anon he is sculptured as a man with the head of a lion and the ears of an ass. Sometimes he is a monster, half lion and half eagle. In this form he is assailed by Vul, who smites him with the thunderbolt. Again he is a dragon of parts prodigious, as he might have been seen by Milton or drawn by Doré. Sometimes he wields daggers and clubs, standing in ferocious aspect against another figure like himself, or hovering in vengeful attitude over the winged lion of Nergal, whom he seeks to dismay or destroy.

The Assyrians may be properly defined as idolaters. The images of the gods were to the popular apprehension the gods themselves; nor does it appear that even the kings and priests had other than the coarsest and most material conception of the gods whom they worshiped. The idols were evidently regarded in the light of deities, rather than imperfect and rude attempts to represent the immortal powers. The language of the inscriptions indicates that according to the belief of the Assyrian monarchs a people were helpless when their gods were captured, and the gods were taken when the idols were removed from their shrines. No doubt this coarse materialism was in some degree the result of theological degeneration; for it is evident from the high and solemn language of the

<sup>1</sup> Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Vol. II., p. 27.

Assyrian ritual that the original concepts on which the system was based, were neither gross nor debasing. Still it must be confessed that among the later Assyrians the idol had in a great measure become the god and the god the idol.

The images which were used to represent the deities of Asshur were of clay, or stone, or metal. The clay idols were the idols of the common people. In the temples and palaces the effigies of the gods were of stone or metal. Some were of colossal proportions and were executed with an approach to artistic skill. There was, however, a certain conventional and inexpressive type after which the images were carved, far inferior to what the artist was able to produce when freed from traditional restraints. The images are generally rude and heavy, and have little claim to be described as beautiful or artistic. The stone idols are, of course, greatly superior in design and workmanship to the coarse statuettes which represented to the masses the powers which govern the world; while the still more costly and carefully executed idols of silver and gold which ostentatious monarchs set up in their palaces and temples, were of even greater merit.

The religious beliefs of the Assyrians had but little practical effect upon the conduct and discipline of their lives. A certain coarse sort of honor regulated in some measure the intercourse of the people, but it was perhaps as much the outgrowth of natural conditions as of any sentiment of religious obligation. To the Assyrian king the deity whom he worshiped was a being more powerful than himself, but of like passions and prejudices, quick to be offended, ready to aid in battle, capable of hatred and revenge. The religious imagination of the race flew on heavy wing and hovered low about material forms and forces, and the inner life of the people was characterized by neither the subtle mysticism of the Egyptians nor the fiery zeal of Israel.

The two principal features of the Assyrian ceremonial were the sacrifice and the invocation. The sacrificial part of their religion was attended to by the kings and priests with considerable pomp and formality. The bas-

reliefs of Nineveh give a tolerably succinct representation of the ceremony by which the favor of the gods was sought by the shedding of the blood of beasts. The bull was the favorite sacrificial animal. He is led by the king and a retinue of priests to the porch of the temple, where sits the effigy of the deity on a throne, wearing the horned cap, and stretching out his hand towards the procession. The king carries a cup, from which he pours a libation; so also one of the priests, while the rest attend the animal. A fire burns on an altar near at hand, and here a part—perhaps some sacred organ—is consumed as a savor to the deity. The rest of the sacrifice goes to the priests and the people.

The Assyrian prayers were highly conventional and bombastic. The chief fragments of religious literature exist in the form of prayers and supplications. All the titles and attributes of the god are recited by the worshiper, who categorically enumerates what things he and his ancestors to remote generations have done to merit the divine approval and patronage. All the appellatives of the deity are repeated as carefully as the titles of a modern nobleman in diplomatic correspondence. The inscriptions containing these supplications are a kind of state papers negotiated between the Assyrian priests and their gods.

The people had no great part in the higher ceremonies of religion. The king was not only the embodiment of the state, but also the head of the sacerdotal order. Through him and the priesthood the common throng were permitted to approach the deities and share their beneficence.

The favor of the Assyrian gods was also sought by offerings and gifts. Things taken in war were frequently consecrated in the temples. Young kids and antelopes were brought and given to the priests. Precious stones and gems, and rare metals from foreign lands, were placed before the statuettes of favorite gods until their shrines were resplendent with glittering treasures. The walls and portals of the temples were frequently blazoned with silver and gold, contributed by rich nobles and conquerors returning from successful wars.








Likewise, at intervals the Assyrians feasted in honor of their gods, and rarely, in times of public calamity, endured the rigors and pangs of fasting in order to recover the forfeited favor of the powers on high. In such instances the humiliation was conducted with all the robust vigor of the race. There was neither eating nor drinking until the fast was ended. Ashes were sprinkled on the head, and sackcloth was put on both man and beast. The domestic animals were forced into the same abstinence and discipline as man. All business was suspended, all enterprise hushed, until Asshur had respect to his people.

Though there is no doubt of the occasional sincerity of the religious sentiment among the Assyrians, yet the theological system adopted by the race was less potent in shaping the destiny of the nation than in most of the ancient monarchies. In Egypt and Greece it is proper to say that the worship of the gods occupied a first place in the social and moral philosophy of the people. In Assyria the same could not be truthfully averred. The Assyrian temples were always inferior to the palaces in beauty and magnificence. The courts and halls in which the royal monarch displayed his splendid robes<sup>1</sup> far outshone the sacred places in which the effigies of the immortals were set up in silence. The glories of the imperial *régime* quite surpassed all efforts of the priestly order to dazzle the senses and lead the imagination captive. The religious system of the Assyrians was a matter of convenience and use rather than a sentiment of fervid zeal and enthusiasm, such as inspired most of the ancient peoples.

Passing from the system of faith held by the Ninevites to the merely intellectual achievements—the arts, the science, the literature—of the people of Asshur, we find again that the physical and material vigor of the race outran its progress and development in mind. The elements of Assyrian learning came orig-

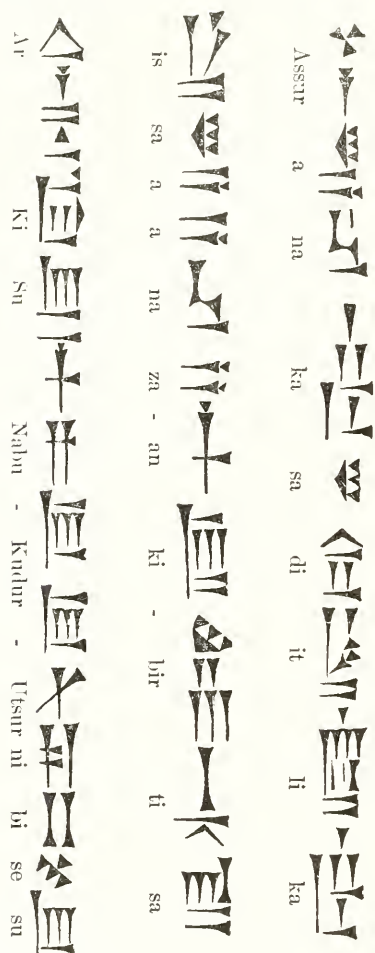
inally from Chaldaea, and it does not appear that the stream ran higher than its source. As in the case of Rome borrowing from Greece the fundamentals of her art and learning, so was it with Nineveh attempting to transplant the genius of Babylon to the banks of the Upper Tigris. Not only were the rudiments of science which were possessed by the Assyrians brought from the older civilization of Lower Mesopotamia, but the language, also, in which these rudiments were imbedded was the old Hamitic dialect of the South—a tongue unknown except to priests and scholars. In this dead language were composed the dry, flat annals of the Early Kingdom and of the beginnings—even the larger part—of the Empire. Not until the times of Asshur-Bani-Pal were translations made out of the Chaldee classic, and works composed in the vernacular. It is rather to art and manufactures than to literature and science that we must look for the civil greatness of Assyria.

In the matter of writing the Assyrians achieved considerable success. The letters employed were nearly the same which have been already described as the written characters of Chaldee. The rectilinear symbols, however, such as , are no longer employed by the Assyrians, only the wedge-shaped letters being used. Of these there are several styles, such as the elongated , the contracted , the broad form , and the arrow-head . These are combined and modified in various ways to the number of about three hundred, and these three hundred cuneiform signs are the primary elements of Assyrian writing. The alphabet, however, has, besides diphthongs and consonantal combinations, but nineteen simple letters, from which it is seen at once that the written symbols employed represented not elementary sounds but syllables; as *pa*, *pi*, *pu*, *ap*, *ip*, *up*. Besides the letters proper, certain other characters were employed as determinatives to indicate the classification of the thing expressed by the following word. Thus the wedge sign placed vertically before a word indicated that that word was the name of a man, while the sign *>>v* indicated that the following word was the name of a god.

The material on which Assyrian writing

<sup>1</sup>The royal and sacerdotal garments worn by Assyrian princes and priests were of the most costly and elaborate patterns: embroidered to the last degree of art; covered with figures and emblems—suns and circles and pine-cones, eagles and lions and sacred trees, pomegranates and dragons and winged bulls.

was executed was either the clay tablet or the slab of stone. The former was most used for the common purposes of life; the latter, for formal and important inscriptions. The royal writings and historical records are, however, frequently found on clay tablets, and the fact that many of these exist unto the present day



Arkisu Nabu-Kudur-Utsur ni bi se su is sa a a na za-an  
ki-bir ti sa Assur a na ka sa di it li ka.

#### ASSYRIAN WRITING.

and furnish our chief source of Assyrian history shows their excellence and durability.

The tablet was generally in the form of an octagonal cylinder, or more properly prism, of fine and thin terra-cotta, on the exterior faces of which the inscriptions were impressed in columns, each side constituting a column, reading from above down. This writing is exceedingly fine, sometimes requiring a magnifying glass for its decipherment. The lines

are five or six to the inch, being as close as *the type in this column*. The prisms, many of which are in excellent preservation, are from eighteen inches to three feet in height; and each contains, when perfect, about as much matter as *twelve pages* of the present volume!

These octagonal tablets were disposed about the courts and halls of palaces in such situations as to be easily read. The rooms and niches in which they were set up constituted the Assyrian library; and here the prince of the house, the occasional scholar, the sage of Asshur, stood or sat, reading the annals of the Empire, the edicts of his sovereign, or the recitative of some priest invoking the gods in prayer.

The writing on the stone slabs was of the same character with that of the tablets. The slabs, however, were frequently of great size. They were dressed and cut to proper dimensions and built into the doorways and walls of palaces and temples. A single slab was sometimes of such proportions as to hold the contents of a small volume. Wherever there was a dressed surface of stone, unoccupied with such ornamentation as prohibited the addition of inscriptions, the Assyrians, like the Egyptians, were fond of covering it with the writing of the country. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of important and striking bas-reliefs were thus covered in their whole extent with these inscriptions sculptured across their surfaces.<sup>1</sup> It thus came to pass that the entablatures and halls and courts of the Assyrian palaces and temples were made to repeat in imperishable records the story of Assyrian greatness.

In all the arts of Assyria there was manifested a striking preference for the practical over the theoretical, for the real over the ideal. Only in rare instances—as when the artist carves fighting dragons or grotesque monsters with drawn knives—did the Assyrian sculp-

<sup>1</sup> A very important and interesting example of this kind of art is set up at the entrance to the Mercantile Library of St. Louis. The slab is perhaps twelve feet high and eight or ten feet wide. It contains a colossal bas-relief of one of the Ninevite kings—a majestic figure—and is literally covered with a cuneiform inscription.



tors attempt to portray the forms of things unreal. In architecture this tendency was constantly exhibited, and the pictorial repre-

ing nations. The factories of Assyria teemed with a multifarious industry deftly conducted by the varying skill of foreign workmen, just as the immigrant Dutch weavers made prosperous the times of Elizabeth.

Vases, jars, dishes, and bottles of glass; bronzes; ornaments of ivory and pearl; engraved gems and brooches; rings and bells; musical instruments—cornets, flutes, harps; and implements of the house and field,—such were the products of the shops of Nineveh. What arms soever the ancient soldier bore in beating down the enemy, in besieging his town, in leading him captive from the battle, or in warding off his thrusts and blows, were produced in inexhaustible stores. The armories of that ever warlike people rang with incessant clangor in the fabrication of the weap-

ony and harness of the stalwart soldiery of Asshur. The mechanical powers were well understood and readily applied, in their sim-

sentations, whether in stone or in color, showed a realism indicative of little imagination in either artist or people. There is little disposition on the part of Assyrian sculptors to idealize the subjects which they treat, or to rise above the actualities of nature. In general conception, in grace of outline and freedom of execution, the works of Nineveh and Asshur fall far short of the products of Greek art; but in boldness and a certain truthfulness to life they are hardly surpassed by any of the classic sculptures of the ancient world.

In manufactures and the arts of trade the Assyrians were preëminent above all peoples of their time. The native genius of the race had an aptitude for the practical activities of the shop and mart; and besides what the natural skill of Assyria was able to produce for the necessities and comfort of the people, foreign training and skill contributed to encourage and multiply the manufactures of the kingdom. Into Nineveh were swept by every war, in accordance with the policy of the kings, multitudes of mechanics and artisans, who brought thither and planted on the Tigris the best genius of the surround-

pler forms, to the production of implements and fabrics. Huge aqueducts and tunnels were constructed. The arch was employed in

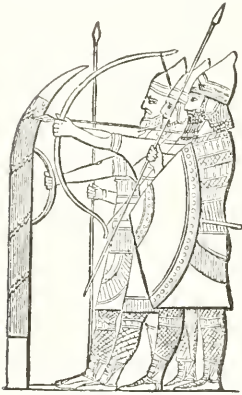


ARROW-HEAD TABLETS AND INSCRIPTIONS.



ASSYRIAN CARICATURE. DRAGONS FIGHTING.

building. Glass was blown and spread into transparent sheets. Gems were engraved with a skill unsurpassed in Paris. Woodwork was



ASSYRIAN SOLDIERS  
FIGHTING.

inlaid with pearl, and garments and robes were woven and ornamented with an exquisite richness and beauty that might well excite the covetous pride of the most voluptuous Shah or Czarina of modern times.

The glory of Assyria was the glory of arms and of material grandeur. The sheen of her

greatness was a barbaric splendor—the product of the genius of a primitive and powerful race expanding under the fiery impulses of

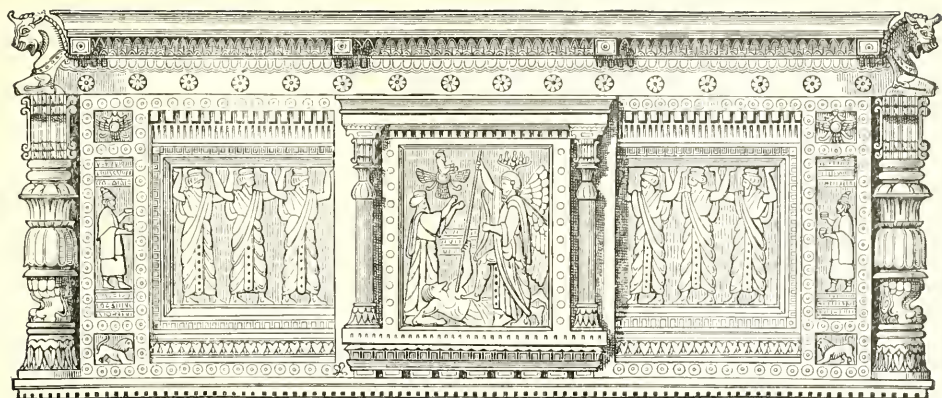
war, enriched by the luxuries of conquest, made haughty by domination.

The Tigris still washes these ancient ruins. The setting sun still falls with his long train of splendid twilight across the Mesopotamian hills, sinking to rest as gloriously as when Asshur-Bani-Pal beheld him for the last time from the western windows of his palace; but the great people who for seven hundred years pressed beneath the conqueror's foot the neck of a hundred enemies, has passed forever into oblivion. Where Sennacherib and Sargon drove their triumphant chariots through the roar of tumultuous thoroughfares, amidst the shouts of a victorious soldiery, some half-savage Kurds, sitting on the broken stones of Khorsabad or Nimrud, watch a distant flock, and at the fall of night the jackal sets up a howl as he issues from his den in the basement of a ruined palace.



SUING FOR PEACE.

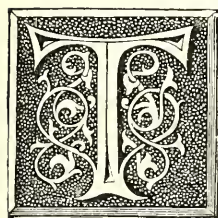




## Book Fourth.

# MEDIA.

## CHAPTER XV.—COUNTRY AND PRODUCTS.



THE country of MEDIA, now included in the northern portion of the Persian Empire, was the scene of the first upland kingdom of Western Asia. Here it was demonstrated that civilization can flourish beyond the alluvium of the river bottoms. The country consists of a plateau on the thither side of the Zagros mountains, sloping to the south and east. On the north, from Ararat almost to the Caspian, the river Aras<sup>1</sup> is the boundary; and on the north-east the Elburz chain, rising, not like the Zagros, in parallel ridges with intervening valleys, but in a single lofty range around the Lower Caspian, with spurs breaking off at right-angles, constitutes the natural limit. Eastward lies the land of the Afghans, between which and Media there is no natural demarkation, and on the south the country descends to the arid plains peculiar to the desert parts of Persia. The general elevation of this important district is more than three thousand feet above the level of the sea.

In shape Media is a parallelogram, lying

with its greater axis from north-west to south-east. The length of this greater dimension is six hundred miles, and the average breadth about two hundred and fifty miles. This gives the not inconsiderable area of one hundred and fifty thousand square miles—a country considerably larger than Chaldæa and Assyria together. The whole peninsula of Italy is only two-thirds, and the British Islands no more than four-fifths, as large as Media Proper with the limits here defined.

The political boundaries of ancient Media are difficult to determine. The authorities disagree; nor can it be doubted that at some periods the limits of the kingdom were much greater than at others. The historian can look only to those physical barriers to which political power would naturally extend and beyond which it could not pass. These barriers on at least three sides of Media may be determined with approximate accuracy.

On the west the center of the Zagros may be accepted as the Median boundary in that direction. On the north the boundary would be the mountain chain which shuts in Lake Urumiyeh, and further east the river Aras. On the east the natural limit was that branch

<sup>1</sup> The classical *Araxes*.

of the Elburz in which lies the pass called the Caspian Gates, and further south the great salt deserts of Khorasan. On the south there is no natural demarkation, but from many considerations a line nearly coincident with the thirty-second parallel of latitude may be regarded as a fair approximation to the old boundary between Media and Persia.

The upper part of Media is specially mountainous. The ancient district of Atropatêné, the modern Azerbaijan, in the north-western portion of the country, is almost Alpine in its elevations. The Elburz, also, though narrow at the base, is by no means an unaspiring range. Out of this arises at a distance of forty miles from Teheran the snow-capped Demavend, the most slightly mountain peak in all Asia west of the Himalayas. The Zagros, already many times mentioned in the history of Assyria, consists of six or seven parallel elevations with depressions between, the whole running in a broad mountainous belt between the valley of the Tigris and the Median plain.

As the traveler traverses Media from the north-west angle to the south, he beholds a gradual descent of the mountains into hills, these in turn sinking into rocky plains, and finally vanishing in the desert. Except on the south, the boundaries of Media are rocky elevations, highest on the north and north-east, while the central portion of the country thus inclosed is a rough and arid plain. The mountainous skirts of the land are full of ravines and gorges, from the sides of which in many places summits shoot up with precipitous sides of gray rock. The general aspect falls coldly on the vision, and the natural inaccessibility of the region suggests a predatory people, fond of hunting and war.

The rivers of Media are of minor importance. The streams which take their rise from the Elburz are short and narrow. Those of the eastern slope hurry down the bill-sides and plunge into the Caspian; while those on the western declivity are feeble in their waters and are soon lost in the desert plains of the south. Those rivers rising from the Zagros on the west and entering the Tigris have already been described. Some of those whose fountains are on the eastern slopes of the same mountains

have a considerable volume, and flowing in an easterly direction gather into rivers of importance. The KIZIL-UZEN makes its way, in a course of four hundred and ninety miles, to the Caspian. The ZENDERUND waters a considerable district in the north-central portion of Media, and the BENDAMIR, flowing by Persepolis, falls into Lake Bakhtigan.<sup>1</sup> These three rivers are the dominant physical facts in the best portion of the country; and this district, neither unproductive in fruits nor cheerless in aspect, was the heart of the land in the times of Median supremacy.

In some limited parts the land was beautiful. In the north-west angle, on the skirts of Lake Urumiyeh, some verdant and picturesque scenery greets the eye of the traveler. Many of the valleys of the Zagros are rich in both beauty and fertility. The banks of the Zenderund, especially in the upper part of its course, are bordered with green pastures and occasional evidences of luxuriance. For the rest, the general aspect of Media is that of an arid and sterile upland—rocky, alkaline, poor in trees and rain and running streams, tending to a desert. The color of the landscape, except for two months in spring, is brown. The herbage is dry and juiceless, having its roots in a soil of clay and gravel. The grass is coarse and the bushes stunted in growth. The eye turns wearily around the horizon, and is not satisfied. Even in Atropatêné, one of the best districts of Northern Media, large sterile tracts are found at intervals, and gray downs spread out, treeless and desolate, on either hand.

From time immemorial Media has suffered not only from her scant supply of water, but from the sunken position of the little which nature has bestowed. The river beds are so low and the valleys through which they course so greatly depressed below the level that the artificial distribution of moisture is impracticable. The vast systems of irrigation which were so easy and natural in the low countries,

<sup>1</sup> It is a noteworthy fact that of all the greater rivers of Media not a single one reaches the ocean. The Aras and the Kizil-Uzen make their way to the Caspian. All the rest waste their waters on the arid south.



with their lazy rivers coursing along beds but little lower than the general level, were not to be thought of in the Median gorges and hills. Civilization was proportionally retarded, and the pursuits of the nomad and warrior were favored at the expense of husbandry. Of all the Median rivers only the Zenderund was of a character to have its waters artificially distributed. All of the other streams lay in the bottom of sunken channels, and plunged along with a turbulence terrifying to the peasant and fatal to bridges.

Of other bodies of waters the most important is LAKE URUMIYEH. It lies four thousand two hundred feet above the level of the sea, and is a shallow sheet spread out under a blue sky. The length from north-west to south-east is eighty miles, and the average breadth is about twenty-five miles. It is a brackish, fishless body of water, a sort of Dead Sea of the mountains, nearly divided by a peninsula projecting from the eastern shore and dotted with a few inconsiderable islands. The waters, though incapable of supporting life, are azure in their hue, not unlike the lake tints of Northern Italy, and the natives call the cerulean sheet the Blue Sea—in their language, the *Kapotan Zow*.

For purposes of civil administration ancient Media was divided into eleven districts. These subdivisions were, however, embraced in two larger parts known as GREAT MEDIA and ATROPATÈNÉ. The principal minor provinces were Rhagiana, Ardelan, and Nisea—the latter being the district famous from times immemorial for its fine breed of horses. The other provinces mentioned by Ptolemy were Margiana, Choromithréné, Elymaïs, Sigriana, Daritis, and Syro-Media. These districts seem not to have been divided from each other by natural barriers, and it is possible—even probable—that in the times of the Empire only the two great divisions of Atropaténé and Media the Great were recognized, the former being the old home of the Medes, and the latter a country added by conquest and colonization.

The capital city of Great Media was ECBATANA,<sup>1</sup> situated somewhat to the east of the

Zagros range, at the foot of Mount Orontes, now known as Mount Erwend. The city was doubtless on the site of the modern Susa—a beautiful situation, verdant in spring and summer, well watered with mountain streams, and sloping gently to the west. According to Diodorus Siculus, the ancient city had a circumference of fifty stadia, which would give an area of *fifty square miles*. No doubt, however, the historian in giving these extravagant dimensions recited what he had heard from the story-tellers of his times, rather than what he himself had seen and measured. Three or four square miles would perhaps be a nearer approximation to the real extent of Ecbatana, nor is this an inconsiderable area for an ancient city.

In the case of the Median capital it is to be regretted that antiquarian research has as yet supplied but little information concerning the size and character of the city. The site is covered by the modern Susa, and no doubt from age to age the ancient remains have been rebuilt and built upon until, as in Venice and Rome, the old outline is destroyed and the old plan effaced. No expedition of a scientific character has ever been sent to exhume and explore the ancient city, nor is it certain that any account capable of verification can ever be produced of the old capital of the fiery Medes.

The authority of Polybius may, however, be cited respecting some of the principal features of Ecbatana. By him the dimensions of the ground-plan of the palace of Cyaxares are given in definite measurements. The circumference of the building is said to have been one thousand four hundred and twenty yards in extent. Albeit, this is the measurement of the mound or raised platform on which the palace was reared, rather than the dimensions of the actual foundation of the building. The palace itself seems to have been something in the same style as the later royal buildings in Susa and Persepolis, and not wholly unlike the temples of Greece. There were without two rows of columns, the first supporting the main structure, and the second constituting the principal feature of the peristyle or external colonnade. The col-

<sup>1</sup>In Greek, *Agbatana*; in Persian, *Hagmatan*.

urns were of cypress or cedar, and were adorned with precious metals. Supported by the capitals, and crossing each other at right angles overhead, were beams of the same rich woods similarly garnished. The roof was composed of silver tiles, which lay flashing in the sunlight. All the conspicuous parts of the palace without and within were made to glitter with sheets of silver and gold laid upon the surface. In later times stone pillars and columns took the place of the colonnade of wood, and the somewhat oriental style of ornamentation gave place to the severer tastes of the West.

Near to the palace stood the *acē* or citadel. It was the treasury of the city and state—a place of great natural strength and well defended by the skill of man. The public archives of the kingdom were here deposited for safe keeping, and as the tides of war swept by, the Medes looked to this stronghold as the Greeks to the Acropolis, and the Romans to the Capitoline hill. What manner of buildings and fortifications constituted the defenses of the place only conjecture can testify. Some ruins of later date are all that mark the site once covered with the bulwarks of the capital city of the Medes.

Besides the citadel it does not appear that Ecbatana had any considerable defenses. To the city tradition assigns no walls. Those races which are able to protect themselves *with* walls, are better able to do so *without* them. When London must be defended with a rampart the Fijis will indeed be ready to take possession of St. Paul's. Among the ancient nations the Medes and Persians, as a general rule, trusted not to walled towns, but rather to the valor and prowess of their soldiery.

Until recently much confusion has existed in respect to the size and character of Ecbatana. Most of this has arisen from the fact that the capital town of Northern Media was also called by the same name. The latter was situated in the province of Azerbaijan, and was built on the summit of a hill, rising like a sugar-loaf above the surrounding country. This conical elevation sloped down to the plain on all sides, and was encircled with a seven-fold rampart. On the center of the

summit was placed the citadel, with the treasure-house and palace of the king. The concentric walls were painted of different colors, the outer one being white, the next black, the third scarlet, the fourth blue, the fifth orange, the sixth silver, and the seventh golden—so that viewed from the surrounding plain the concentric battlements of different hues, rising one above the other and the whole crowned in the center with the imposing citadel, presented a scene at once picturesque and grand.

The NORTHERN ECBATANA was situated in the valley of the Saruk, a tributary of the Jagheta. The conical hill seems to have been formed, as are some of those in the Yellowstone National Park, by the overflow of a mineral lake, the deposit of whose waters, rising in incrustations, accumulated from year to year, lifting the small lake to the summit. A mountain of this sort, covered with ruins and surrounded on the sloping sides, is found in the locality described, and seems to answer well the position assigned to the old capital of Northern Media.

The third city of the Median Empire was RHAGA, situated near the Caspian Gates. It was one of the oldest settlements of the Aryan race, and is mentioned in the Zend-Avesta. It is also referred to in the apocryphal books of Tobit and Judith as the capital of Media where Arphaxad reigned. It was the chief town of the province of Rhigiana, on the eastern border of the Median territory, but the exact location of the city has not been definitely ascertained. Some ruins at the modern village of Rhey are thought to mark the site of Rhaga, and the names are sufficiently similar to strengthen that supposition. At any rate the city was only a day's march from those wonderful passes<sup>1</sup> where the Elburz chain is cleft in twain for the exit of man from the Median uplands to the sea.

Fourth among the cities of Media was CHARAX, the site of which is now marked by

<sup>1</sup>The so-called "Caspian Gates" are one of the wonders of geography. One of the passes is of tremendous proportions. The mountain range is cleft at right angles to the bottom. The walls of rock stand up on either hand a thousand feet in height. The gateway is about five miles long and no more than from ten to forty feet in width.



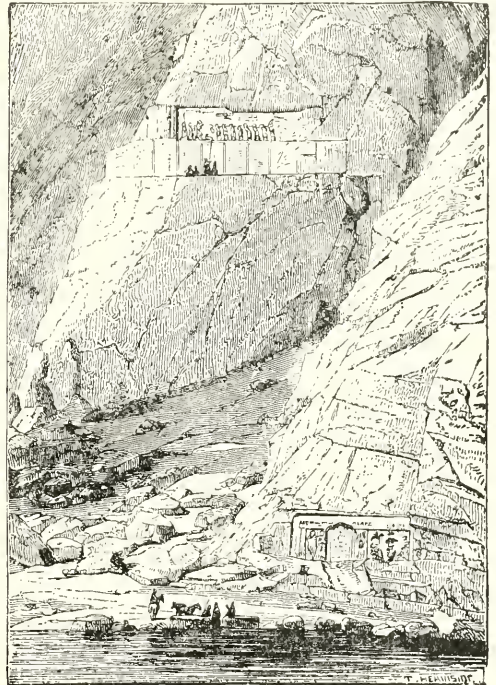
the ruins of Uewanukif, near Rhaga just described. Not much is known of the character and importance of this town, and the same may be said, with but slight qualifications, of all the ancient cities of the Medes. The work of scientific discovery, which has been directed with so great profit to the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, has been turned but little to the Median ruins; and the task of the antiquary, as it relates to this important district, is yet to be performed.

Besides the four cities above referred to, four others of considerable note, belonging to Western Media, may be mentioned. They were all situated on the slopes of the Zagros and were therefore better known to the Assyrians and the nations of the West than were the remote cities of the Median plains. The first in rank and importance of the western towns was BAGISTAN. It is situated on the direct route from Babylon to Ecbatana, and has been easily identified with the modern Behistun. The description given by the ancients of the scenery and surroundings of Bagistan might almost be repeated to-day of what the traveler sees about the Persian town which marks the site of the buried city. Here is the famous Rock of Behistun, where Semiramis is said to have carved her own effigy and a commemorative inscription. Here, also, according to the tradition, she established a great park or paradise, which was refreshed with a marvelous fountain of water. Here, too, upon the face of the living rock, are the world-famous inscriptions of Darius the Great. Upon the scarped surface of these precipices nation after nation—Mede, Persian, Parthian—has left the trace of its power and fame.

Further on towards Ecbatana, at the foot of the southern slope of the Elwend, was the ancient Median town of ARDAPAN. The site has been identified with that of the Persian village of Arteman. Our only knowledge of the old city is derived from the historian Isidore, who declares that the sunny climate and cheery rills of the place attracted thither the sovereigns of Media, anxious to escape the boreal rigors of a more northern residence. The royal palace of Ardapan was a favorite

resort of fatigued and disgusted kings until the splendid structure was sacked and destroyed by Tigranes, the Armenian.

The third town of this second group was CONCOBAR. The massive ruins which overlook the modern Kungawar make it comparatively certain that the two sites are identical. Here, as well as at Bagistan, the mythical Semiramis had her paradise and temple. That tradition, however, which ascribes the temple to Artemis may contain a larger fraction of truth. The



SCULPTURED ROCK OF BEHISTUN.

uncertain certainty of the mortal queen gives place to the certain uncertainty of the immortal divinity. In either case, it is but the finger of conjecture which points out the foundation of the ancient edifice.

The last of the Median towns here calling for mention was ASPADAN, in the extreme southern limit of the country, close to the confines of Persia. The modern Persian capital, Isfahan, occupies the site, and the recent name is nearly the same as the old.

Owing to the perishable character of Median buildings—as compared with the everlasting structures of the Euphrates and Tigris valley—not much can now be known of the relative

importance of the towns of Media. Wood, even the beam of cedar, perishes. The architecture of the Medes is eaten up of time, and the little that Time has spared War has devoured. Not a single edifice of the times of the Empire has remained in any thing more than shadowy outline within the whole country of ancient Media. As a consequence, the opportunities for reconstructing the architecture and the social life of which it was the outer garb are either meager or altogether wanting.

The climate of Media could be inferred from the situation of the country. The zone, the elevation, the trend of the region, the proximity of great waters and high mountains—these are the elements out of which climate is compounded. As Media was greatly elevated, the country was dry, arid. The mountain walls and southern trend gave a higher temperature than would have otherwise prevailed. The not inconsiderable extent of the country from north to south, the variations in elevation, and especially the proximity of the desert on one side, furnished the conditions of variability.

In general, the climatic division of the region here considered was into two parts—Atropaténé, or Northern Media, and the Southern Plateau, the latter being subdivided into a western and an eastern district, differing greatly from each other in natural characteristics.

The climate of Atropaténé is one of extremes. In summer the temperature rises almost to 100 degrees of Fahrenheit, and in winter the cold is excessive. Perhaps no other region of the globe, lying in the same latitude, is subject to such extreme rigors. By the close of November the ground is frozen. Then comes the snow, may be to the depth of several feet. Then in midwinter clear weather prevails, the sun blazing around his shortened circuit by day, and the chaste moon smiling coldly, almost disdainfully, on the snow glare by night. All the while a bitter high wind, keen and merciless as the sword of an Afghan, whirls across the icy hills, and he who faces it long may fall down frozen to death. This terrible winter is largely

attributable to the great elevation of the district, the very valleys being as much as four thousand or five thousand feet about the level of the sea.

During the winter months out-of-door activity is mostly suspended. The incontinent caravan, sometimes tempted to set forth, finds a probable grave in the drift. By the middle of March the ice-manacles are generally broken, and nature begins to revive. On the hill-tops the snow fights with the sun until May-day. About this time there is an epoch of rainy weather. The sunshine rouses a sudden heat in the valleys. There is a quick outburst of luxuriance. The slopes flush green. Ominous clouds pass over. Now and then one of them bursts with a clap of thunder. One shower chases another across the fields. Hard after the dash of rain comes perhaps a blast of hail-stones. Calves in the pastures are sometimes killed; likewise men. The houses are hammered; the fruit-trees knocked to pieces. Sometimes in the morning Nature is robed in an infinite fog. Then bright, warm days follow fast, and in June it is hot, sultry. Altogether, the autumn is the most pleasant season. The weather is settled, and life has something of equanimity.

Passing out of Atropaténé and journeying to the south-east a modification is soon noticed in the climate. The winters are shorter. The snow, even in December and January, is scant and soon melts away. Ten or fifteen degrees below the freezing point is about the minimum temperature. This is the eastern part of the great plateau. Here are the important cities of Teheran and Isfahan. In spring-time all nature bursts out a-blooming. The gardens are full of roses. The air breathes balm. For a season every sense is in paradise. Song-birds, the very *prime donne* of the thicket and croft, make vocal the perfumed breezes. While the scant showers of spring continue there is nothing wanting to soothe or intoxicate. At a later date the sultry air of summer begins to scorch and blast the beauty of the earlier months. The mercury rises on some hot mid-day to 100° F. Vegetation withers. At intervals a gust of hot air blows up from the southern desert, and life flies before it.



Fortunately, however, the mountains with their snows are not far away, and when the breeze turns and falls from these incorruptible heights there is a most grateful vicissitude from the otherwise intolerable breath of the desert. In all ages the better class of people in these districts of Media have been in the habit of seeking refuge during the heats of July and August in the shadow of the adjacent mountains, from whose cool white brow the refreshing air has dropped upon the feverish faces of the suppliant population. Indeed, the city of Hamadan seems to have been founded by those who were escaping from the sultry plains. Here, by the nearness of the mountain and the plentiful supply of spring water, the natural conditions of a summer resort were discovered long before the dubious luxuries of civilization had made *ennui* one of the afflictions of society. The same—or nearly the same—praise may be bestowed upon the situation of Ecbatana, which was chosen as the summer residence of the Persian kings.

If it were not for the scantiness of the rainfall the Median plateau might be justly described as a delightful climate. In respect of moisture much is wanting to the comfort and luxuriance of the regions. The soil is rarely drenched with the dead drunkenness of rain, and the thirsty plains swallow with a feverish gulp the occasional libations of the clouds. As a consequence of this atmospheric drought the dews of night are correlatively scanty, and each morning sees quickly enacted the cruel tragedy of Apollo and Daphne. Albeit the dryness of the air is favorable to health, and the dark vapors of the poisonous marsh and sunless jungle are unknown in the Median uplands, where the fields glisten and the hair of Nature is as crisp as flax.

One of the most striking atmospheric phenomena of this part of Media is the whirlwind. Ever and anon, in the hot season, a sudden gust from the heated sands of the south strikes a counter current of colder air dropping from the mountain slopes, and a focus is produced, around which a great cloud of leaves, stubble, and sand is twisted into an inverted cone, with its base against the sky. The monstrous apparition goes whirling across the plains, fling-

ing all lighter substances to the capricious demons of the air; but the violence of such storms is by no means so great as that of the tornadoes and cyclones of the tropics. In this region of Media also appears the famous mirage, the wonder of travelers and puzzle of philosophy. The strange phenomenon is supposed to be the result of unequally rarefied strata of air thrown into undulations by the heated surface of the earth and viewed horizontally. Spectral images are thus produced of things which lie in the distance, perhaps below the horizon. Mountains appear where there are none; villages rise in the waste, and springs in the desert. The scene is a phantasmagoria. Giants are transformed into columns, and a clump of bushes into the domes and minarets of a city. Lakes of bright water bordered with the palm hang motionless not far away, then vanish. It is the whimsical specter of the desert.

In the western portion of the Median plateau the climate is greatly modified by the proximity of the Zagros. In the more mountainous part of this region the severe cold of the protracted winter is like that of Atropaténé. Adown the slopes the rigors are less relentless, and in the valleys there is warmth and verdure. Here, too, water and running streams are more abundant than in any other portion of Media. In summer the valley air is humid, and in some parts malaria prevails, and the people suffer from chills and fever. In this country of hills and glens it is possible, as in California, to pass in a few hours' journey from the bleak frosts and snows of the mountains to the luxuriance, warmth, and sunshine of the vales.

The plateau of Media is in great measure devoid of timber. It were hard to say whether the generally arid condition of the region is attributable to the absence of forests or whether the failure of the latter has been caused by the persistent atmospheric drought.<sup>1</sup> On the

<sup>1</sup>The correlation of vegetation and rain is a question for which civilization must furnish a practical solution. The tree and the water-brook are inseparable phenomena, but which is the cause of the other? It is evident that vegetation depends upon humidity, but does not the rain-cloud follow the forest and shun the waste? Is it

mountains the case is different. Here the forest growth is abundant and stalwart. The high ridges of Atropaténé are not so heavily wooded as the Zagros ranges on the west. The latter are covered with heavy timber. The Elburz chain is clad with forests of pine, wild almond, and oak. Here, too, the poplar and walnut abound. Ash and terebinth groves are common, as well as those in which the oriental plane-tree and the willow are the prevalent growth. The oak, besides its use as a timber-tree, yields abundantly the nutgalls of commerce. The hill-slopes are covered with the plant which yields gum tragacanth, and many districts abound in nuts and berries.

In the valleys of the Zagros and the more sheltered parts of Northern Media the orchards are as fine as in any part of the world. In these almost every kind of fruit grows to perfection. These regions seem to be the native land of apples, pears, and peaches. Here, also, the vine flourishes. The olive, the almond, and the apricot grow wild. Quinces of richest flavor, plums, cherries, mulberries, and nectarines complete the list of principal fruits belonging to the vales of Zagros and the more favored parts of Atropaténé.

On the great plateau, as already said, forest trees are scattered but sparsely. The prevailing types are the plane, the poplar, and the willow. More rarely the cedar, the elm, and the cypress are found, chiefly along the banks of the infrequent rivers. Back a short distance from the streams the forest growth dwindles to bushes and shrubs—only a clump of thorn here and there or some half-grown tamarisk breaks the monotony of the gray and cheerless plain. Of all Media by far the most exuberant district is that which lies along the Lower Aras. Here there is a native luxuriance equal to that of any region in the world. The very delta of the Nile has scarcely a greater fecundity. Flowers and fruits grow wild, and the grass is so high in summer that a man on horseback is hidden as he passes.

As to those products which flourish only by culture, Media resembles other lands of

not probable that all the deserts of the world can be reclaimed by the simple expedient of planting trees?

the same latitude and elevation. The physical conformation of the country is not unfavorable to agriculture. In Atropaténé and on the slopes of the Zagros the soil is easily upturned with the plow, and the various crops spring up and ripen without much attention or labor. The leading cereals are wheat, barley, millet, sesame, corn, and rice. The tobacco plant flourishes, as does also the castor bean, and the fields whiten with cotton as in the Southern States of the Union. In the gardens are cucumbers, melons, and pumpkins. Nor is the estate of man, as determined by the means of subsistence, in any respect equivocal or menaced with peculiar hardships.

In all parts of the Median plateau to which nature has not denied a sufficiency of water, the same—though less flattering—agricultural conditions exist. As we proceed to the south and east, however, and the streams dwindle and die, and the springs become few and poor in water, cultivation becomes more difficult and less fruitful of results. In modern times a system of canals and tunnels has in some degree triumphed over the natural tendency to barrenness; but in the days of the Median Empire no such artificial compensation of nature's poverty was known. The plateau of Iran, which, in our day produces moderately good crops of wheat, corn, barley, rice, and millet, was perhaps incapable of such production at the time when Media was in her power. Still, at the present time, the yield of fruits and vegetables is in many parts fairly, and in a few especially, good. In a few districts the melons and grapes are proverbially fine in flavor. Besides these exceptional products, a large part of the Median plain is peculiarly adapted to the production of sundry drugs well known among the nations. The principal of these are rhubarb, senna, opium, asafetida, madder, saffron, and tobacco.

In the decoration of the earth few countries can equal Media. The flowers are luxuriant and abundant. In the brief spring, and again for a season in the autumn, the blossoms are everywhere. In the summer, as in many parts of the United States, the sun devours every thing. For a while, however,



there is beauty. The magnificent rose-tree, sometimes fourteen or fifteen feet in height, covers herself with a queenly festoon, painted with every hue and fragrant with the richest odors. The gardens are adorned with flowering shrubs, chief of which are the lilac and the jasmine. In some districts hollyhocks grow wild, as do also tulips, crocuses, and lilies. Primroses, heliotropes, and pinks are seen, and water-lilies rarely by the margin of the streams. In like situations many fragrant mints are found, and sages in the gardens. The chief feature of all this region is the rapid metamorphosis from the desolation of winter to the verdure and flowers of spring, and a similarly sudden blight of all this beauty with the apparition of the withering heats of summer.

In the matter of mineral wealth Media is by no means to be contemned. Her quarries of stone are equal in quality to those of Assyria and much more widely distributed. In the hills near Lake Urumiyeh is found the famous yellow Tabriz marble, which is so transparent as to be cut thin and used instead of window glass. Other varieties have different hues, according to the nature of the carbonates deposited from the springs of the neighborhood. Good grades of building stone are found in nearly every part of the country, and the quarries show that considerable attention has been given, both in ancient and modern times, to getting out and preparing the enduring materials furnished by nature. It appears, however, that the uses to which stone was put by the Medes were rather such as setting curbs and laying pavements in baths and palaces than in architecture proper.

Of the wealth of Media in the precious metals not much is known. It is thought that some parts of the Zagros contain mines of gold and silver. There are traditions of gold mines in other mountainous districts, but modern exploration has not demonstrated the truth of the stories. The same uncertainty prevails in respect to the mines of lead and antimony which are said to exist in Atropaténé. It is certain that quartz rock abounds, and this would lead to the expectation of the precious metals. In the way of gems the

most important were emeralds and *lapis lazuli*. As to salt there is an endless—not to say infinite—supply. Vast plains are covered with it. Salt springs are found in many places, and the whole desert country towards the south-east is more or less glazed with saline incrustations. Rock salt, too, is abundant, and is quarried out for native and foreign consumption. Niter and sulphur are found in the Elburz mountains and fine beds of alum along the Aji Su.

The wild animals of Media are of the same general types with those of Assyria. Among the ferocious beasts the principal are the lion, the tiger, the leopard, and the bear. In some parts the wild boar is a terror. Jackals, wolves, and beavers are common, as are also foxes, rabbits, and porcupines. Another group embraces the wild ass, the goat, the sheep, the ibex, the stag, and the antelope. The aurochs or mountain ox inhabits the Zagros. Among the smaller tribes may be named the marmot, the rat, the ferret, and the mole. Of all the districts of Media, Atropaténé has the greatest number of animals, and several of the species above enumerated—such as the tiger and the lion—are limited to this part of the country. The Median wild ass differs from that of Mesopotamia, as well as from that of Tartary, in having no dark lines across the shoulders. His ears are large and heavy, like those of a donkey, and his mane is short and black.

Among the domestic animals of Media the most important was the camel. He was the chief reliance of whoever had burdens to transport from place to place. There were three breeds: the Bactrian, with the double hump in his back; the Arabian, with his longer and fleetier limbs; and a cross-breed possessing the better points of the other two. After the camel the mule was next in usefulness, and was preferred in the mountainous districts for his smaller size and surer footing.

Most celebrated of all the Median domestic animals were the Nisean horses, whose praises were recited by nearly all the historians from Herodotus to Livy. These steeds were noted for their great size and peculiar shape, and were prized by all the kings and princes of the East. The breed is thought to have been

of Parthian extraction, and to be represented in Media at the present day by a stock of horses called Turkoman. Another breed is now found in the country, which is evidently of Arabian descent and more recent development.

The kine of Media differed not much from those found in most countries belonging to the north temperate zone. The sheep and the goat were of the common varieties, and were deduced from the wild breeds of the hills. As to dogs, the finest was that Macedonian greyhound which, if tradition is to be accepted, was introduced in Assyria and beyond by the armies of Alexander. The animal is strong and swift, being used in pursuit of the antelope and other fleet-footed and long-winded game. His scent is fine and his instinct unerring, though in fleetness he is reckoned inferior to the greyhound of England.

The great bird of the Median upper air is the eagle. After him the genus *Falco* is represented by the falcon proper and several species of hawk. Of land birds the most noted are the stork, the pelican, and the bustard. Of the edible birds the chief are the quail, the partridge, the dove, the pigeon, and the snipe. On the great Plateau water-fowl are rarely seen, but in Atropaténé wild ducks are frequently noticed by the traveler. The principal song birds are thrushes, linnets, larks, goldfinches, and nightingales, while the chattering race is represented by the crow, the magpie, and the blackbird. In the neighborhood of Isfahan pigeons are reared for profit, and the round towers which are the homes of innumerable flocks are seen here and there in the landscape.

As already said, the lakes of Media are fishless, being salt. Not so the rivers, though in these the finny tribes do not abound. The

colder streams of the Zagros yield some fine trout. As for the rest, the rivers of the Plateau have several varieties of carp, barbel, and gudgeon, but the waters are generally too brackish to be a favorite home of fishes. In many Median streams the unpoetic craw-fish, with his reversed locomotion, is as much the object of the fisherman's craft as the more graceful denizens of the open river.

Portions of Media are as much plagued with poisonous reptiles as any part of the globe. In the grassy flat-lands along the lower Araxes, snakes of vicious and deadly species so abound that travel in summer time is hardly practicable. Other districts are likewise infested with both serpents and scorpions, but the sting of the latter is rather troublesome than dangerous. Lizards are very abundant and of every hue. They are sometimes more than two feet in length, and are a terror to Europeans, though perfectly harmless. Of the plague-pests of the air the most formidable are the locusts. When they come it is in a cloud that darkens the air. A single day of their devouring reign is sufficient to sweep from a whole district the last vestige of verdure. The very twigs and branches of plants and trees are destroyed, and nothing but a mockery of vegetation left in the land. The only compensation for the scourge is found in the fact that the poorer people avenge themselves by eating the eaters of their orchards.

Besides the ravenous breed of locusts, there are one or two other varieties of destroying insects, notably a kind of ferocious grasshopper, described as being four inches in length and armed behind with a sword. The creature is not, however, so formidable as indicated by his appearance, being a kind of diminished Falstaff of the meadows, with more noise than danger in him.



## CHAPTER XVI.—THE PEOPLE.



WHEN the hosts of Xerxes moved down the defile of Thermopylæ, the men selected to clear the pass of the Spartans were a body of MEDES. It was the

first introduction of that fierce soldiery to the people of the West. They were at that time in close alliance with their kinsmen, the Persians; and indeed the two races have ever been intimately associated on the page of history. "Medo-Persian" is the name by which the great dominion established by the Achæmenian kings has been immemorially designated. "Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians," was the interpretation of the ominous inscription on the wall of Belshazzar, the Babylonian viceroy, and in a thousand paragraphs of Greek and Roman literature the two peoples are in like manner mentioned together.

Those readers who have given some attention to the study of the races of mankind will understand the ethnic place of the Medes from the statement that they were an offshoot from the Iranic branch of Asiatic Aryans. This classification throws them first of all into relationship with the Persians, more remotely with the races of the Indus, and still more remotely with the Greeks, the Romans, and the Kelts. For the unscholarly reader the Medes may be classified as belonging to the Japhetic family of Adamites.

Nearly all that is known concerning the physical characteristics of the people of ancient Media has been gathered from the sculptures of Persepolis. These carvings represent not only the Persians, by whose artists the sculptures were executed, but also the kindred Medes, who, as the older people, were in good fame at the Persian capital. Besides, the Greek historians—Herodotus and notably Xenophon in the *Cyropædia* and the *Anabasis*—have given personal and character sketches of the Medes, so full and explicit that their ap-

pearance is almost as well known as that of the Romans or Assyrians. From these sources it is known that the typical Mede was tall and graceful and of great physical nobility. The physiognomy was almost equal in beauty to the Greek, while in strength of body the Mede was hardly inferior to the warrior of Assyria. The Median forehead was high and straight, and the nose was of that Macedonian type which continues in the same line with the forehead, long and well formed, and sometimes hawk-like and imperious. The upper lip was short and moustached; the chin round and strong and heavily bearded. The hair was abundant to superfluity, and was drawn back from the forehead and twisted into curls around the ears and neck. From the care shown in its arrangement, the Medes were evidently proud of the plentiful locks which clustered around their heads. The Median women are described by the Greeks as of great personal charms. Their beauty was of that queenly style peculiar to semi-heroic ages.

The manner of life among the early Aryans, whether Persian, Hindu, or Greek, was such as to encourage and develop physical perfection, and to make the bodies of men and women glow with those native charms which generally wither under the heats of civilization. For this reason the ancient Mede was, as compared with the modern Persian, a person of beauty and dignity. From the Roman to the Italian marks the distance from freedom to servitude, from open nature to subtle craft, from courage to cunning, from the glory and audacity of paganism to the treachery and servility of religious thralldom. So has it been in Greece, in Media, in Persia, in the valley of the Indus. So will it ever be so long as Nature shall continue to be regarded as the foe instead of the friend of man. The greatness of the intellectual achievement of modern times is tarnished not a little by the eclipse of the physical grandeur and beauty of the early races.

In the qualities of heroic manhood the ancient Medes were rivals of the Greeks. The men of the Median hills had the courage of Athenian soldiers, if not the stoicism of Spartans. Of their warlike daring there can be no doubt. The poems of Horace attest the reputation of the Medes even in the Eternal City, and the prophet Ezekiel describes the kingdom of Cyaxares as the terror of nations.

It was no doubt owing to this warlike constitution that the Medes at the first gained the ascendancy over the surrounding tribes of the great plateau, and laid the foundations of their historic renown. They had the bravery and audacity, if not the artistic possibilities and intellectual force, of the Hellenes. To the present day these same qualities are in some measure preserved in the wild Kurds of the hills, whose face and figure have the freedom and symmetry of Sulliotcs.

Of all the ancient peoples the Medes were perhaps the most remarkable for their management of the horse. They were disciplined from childhood to ride at will, and were trained to perform feats on horseback. This tended to make them sinewy about the chest and erect in figure. Their dress also was of a kind to favor development; so that the hereditary beauty of the old Aryan stock found no difficult expression in the person of the Mede.

Owing to the meager architectural remains left by the people of Media, and the want of a national literature, there is some difficulty in determining from original sources the personal appearance and demeanor of the race, but the Persian decorations and monuments supply the deficiency. It appears that the chief intellectual qualities of the people were a certain barbaric energy and a love of display. Their pride was personal rather than national, and hence it found expression in ostentatious dress more than in architecture. Perhaps no ancient people took more pleasure in personal display than did the Medes. A magnificent dress and stately semi-barbaric bearing characterized them, though their splendor was rather of richness than of artistic effect. In intellect the Medes were not a superior people, and as a consequence their civilization, though

not wanting in force, was unsupported by the principles of perpetuity.

A leading trait of the Median character was cruelty. The reputation of the race was that of unparalleled atrocity in war. The conquests of the Medes were marked by the worst abuses of half-savage warfare. Women, maidens, old men, babes, were all alike the objects of the indiscriminating vengeance of the Median soldiery. The object in battle was rather to insult and wreak vengeance on the foe than to spoil and ravage. The old annals of the East abound in references to the outrages and bloodthirsty spirit of the Medes.

After victory and conquest had brought renown and riches to the race the people gradually imbibed the vices of luxury. Having gained the supremacy over Assyria, the soldiers and courtiers of the Median monarchs soon became enamored of the more expensive and elaborate life of the people whom they had conquered, and began to adopt those methods and gratifications which first intoxicate and then kill. There is little doubt that before the time of Cyrus the Great the native vigor of the Median stock had been sapped to such a degree that the Persians found little difficulty in reversing the political relations between their own and the kingdom of Astyages. It is thus that civilization by relaxing the severity of the habits of her foemen avenges herself and her wrongs upon the spoilers of her vineyards. The luxurious capital of Assyria, with her palaces and banqueting-halls, was thus able to do what the armies of Sarcus were impotent to accomplish—break the power of the Medes.

Being peculiarly a warlike race, the first aspect of Median life is that which presents the army going to battle. The soldiers wore broad-sleeved tunics and trousers. They covered their heads with felt caps and bore their quivers on their backs. The tunic was sometimes converted into a coat of mail by an arrangement of small metallic plates, overlapping like the scales of a fish. The most peculiar piece of the armor was the shield, which was a structure of wickerwork, oblong in form, and equaling or exceeding the height of the

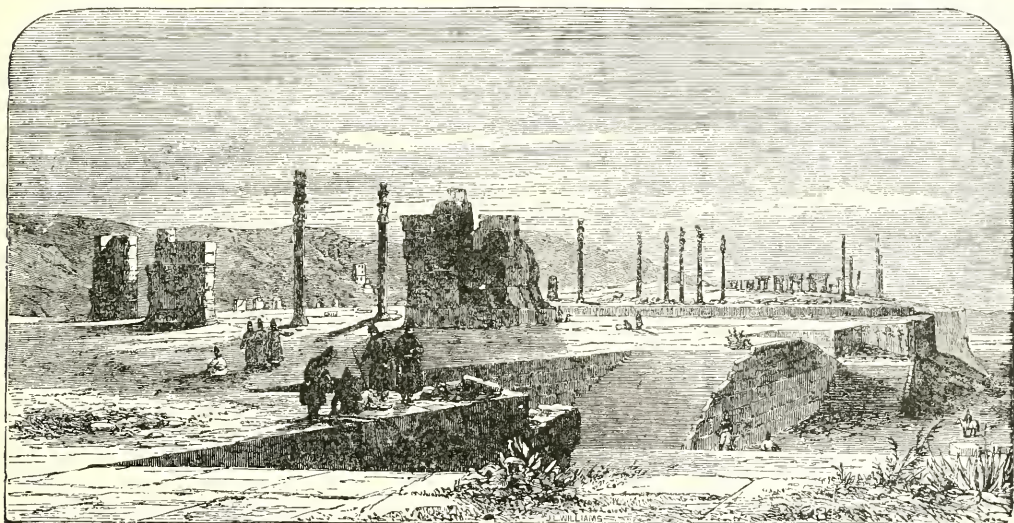


warrior. It was set on the ground before him, and was broad enough to protect two or three soldiers, one of whom discharged arrows from the covert, while the other, armed with a spear, sustained the shield in its place and acted on the defensive.<sup>1</sup> Such was the infantry.

But the more important branch of the service was the horse. The cavalrymen were archers. Skilled in the management of steeds and the use of the bow, they adopted the tactics of whirling in circles round about the foe, discharging from every advantageous position showers of arrows, and then dashing out of reach. It was the tactics of Arabs or Scythians reduced to method and made

inserted in a ring or socket at the upper end of the shaft. The lower end terminated in an ornamental knob or ball, made in the likeness of an apple or pomegranate. At the soldier's right side hung the Median short sword, fastened by a belt around the waist and also secured by a strap to the thigh.

Of the Median dress something has already been said. The principal article of apparel was a long flowing robe, which seems to have been a pattern original with the Medes. This garment was of so great beauty as to strike the fancy of the Greeks, and their historians have immortalized it in the classics. This famous robe was so made as to fit closely



RUINS OF PERSEPOLIS

terrible by discipline. The other weapons of offense, besides the bow, were the spear, the sword, and the dagger. The bow was of a very peculiar pattern—short and greatly curved. It was borne in a case, which was slung either at the side or over the shoulders of the soldier. The Median arrow was short, not exceeding three feet in length. The spear was six or seven feet long, and had the head

<sup>1</sup> Besides the large wicker shield here described, the Medes also employed a small circular disk, made of metal or wood, and ornamented with knobs and circles. It resembled the bosses or small shields carried by the Bœotians, and depended for its efficiency upon the agility and skill of the wearer in intercepting with it the flying arrows of the foe.

about the shoulders and chest and then spread into two capacious sleeves. At the waist it was bound with a girdle, and fell loosely about the lower person to the ankles. It was a garment greatly superior in gracefulness and elegance to the toga of the Romans, to which it bore some general likeness. The color was generally purple, crimson, or scarlet. Sometimes the robe was striped longitudinally with bands of purple and white. The material mostly employed was silk, but among the poorer classes less costly fibers were used—wool, no doubt, for winter garments. It is in this imposing robe that the Medes and Persians are always figured in the sculptures of Persepolis.

The Median foot-dress was a sort of flat-bottomed moccasin, laced or buttoned in front. The head was covered in war with a felt hat, but in peace a kind of light tiara, made of stiff cloth and of a strangely original design, was worn both indoors and out. The general presence of a Mede in full dress was at once stately and picturesque. The people appear to have been inordinately fond of personal display, and to have resorted to many artifices to eradicate the defects of nature and heighten their personal beauty. Nor does it appear that the Median women, more than the men, were addicted to those tricks by which age and ugliness are hidden from attention. The eyes were penciled to magnify their size and luster. The skin was rubbed with cosmetics *à la mode*, and false hair was in demand to supply the occasional deficiency of nature. In short, the shops of Ecbatana in the days of Assyages would have shown to the cynical observer the same elaborate satire upon human nature which in every age of the world Fashion has written on the bodies and lives of her subjects.

The principal ornaments worn by the Medes were of gold. The backward condition of the arts, and the slender commercial connection with other nations rich in precious stones, will account for the general absence of gems among the personal decorations of this people. Necklaces and collars of gold were much worn by the nobility, and plain earrings were generally a part of the adornment of persons of rank. Gold bracelets were common among all classes—nobles, warriors, and even peasants; and the bridle-bits and harness of the horses of the wealthy were decorated with the same precious metal.

The chief feature of the social system of the Medes was polygamy. The king maintained a seraglio of wives and concubines, and the nobles, according to their ability, imitated his example. There were five legitimate wives, who held the same relation in the household, and after these the rest of the retinue. The women were secluded, but not with the same rigor as in modern Mohammedan countries, and the usual abuses peculiar to such a system were prevalent.

The ceremonial of the Median court was characterized by a pompous formality. The monarch himself was rarely seen, and the approach to him was guarded by imposing forms, which must be scrupulously observed. Proper officers stood sentry by the entrance way to the kingly presence. He who would have audience must prostrate himself as if doing homage to a god, and even then he must stand at a distance, between files of eunuchs and courtiers. In affairs of state, and indeed in all important communications, the things said and done had to be presented in writing, and all decisions and decrees were issued in like manner. From time to time the officers of the court submitted reports of such branches of business as were intrusted to them and of the general condition of the Empire. By these means the necessity of going forth from his palace was taken away, and the king for the most part passed his days in seclusion.

As in Assyria, so in Media, hunting was the national sport. In this way the monarch and his nobles amused themselves when the cares of state were less severe. But in the royal chase, as practiced in Assyria and Media, there was this marked difference that, in the latter country, the king himself seldom or never engaged personally in the pursuit of wild beasts. In Assyria, on the other hand, the monarch in person leads the chase, attacks the lion, slays the wild boar. The Median sovereign witnesses and enjoys the sport of his nobles, but as a rule does not engage in the contest. He stands apart, and approves or condemns as his courtiers are skillful or clumsy in the contest.<sup>1</sup>

The principal beasts thus hunted by the Median nobles were the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the wild boar. The pursuit of these was regarded as perilous, and the victorious hunter returned with the honors of war.

<sup>1</sup> It is possible that the Assyrian sculptors represent their emperors as doing what they did only by proxy; but considering the aggressive and warlike spirit of the race of Nimrod, it is not improbable that pictorial representations of the battles of the kings with lions, bears, and boars are true to the facts, and that the royal custom of the Medes was different.



The less dangerous beasts of the chase were stags, gazelles, wild asses, and wild sheep. The method of hunting was to pursue on horseback the prey roused from the covert, and when sufficiently near to strike it down with well-directed arrows or javelins. Sometimes herds of deer were driven into inclosures and shot down at the pleasure of the sportsmen; and troops of wild boars were in like manner, but with more danger, driven into marsh grounds, where they were worried with dogs and bands of "beaters" until they fell an easy prey to the hunter's shaft.

The Medes were great eaters and drinkers. Their banquets were characterized by profusion and luxury. Their tables were laden with rich viands—meat, game, wine, bread, sauces, and indeed every article with which a semi-barbaric appetite could be excited or appeased. The guests ate with the hand, after the oriental fashion, using no knives or forks. The point of distinction at the feast was to multiply the number of dishes with which each guest was surrounded. The meals of nobles and royal personages were always after the manner of banquets. Wine was used freely, and the close of the feast was frequently a rout, of which Bacchus was general-in-chief.

Great care was taken to guard the life of the king. The measures adopted generally indicated social depravity and political treachery. That shocking absence of the sense of honor, for which all Eastern courts are proverbial, was constantly apparent in the relations between the king and his subjects. They would follow him to battle and obey his commands, but could not be trusted. So the food and wine with which the monarch was daily served must always be tasted by the obsequious bearer, lest some faithless courtier should have contrived to destroy the royal life by poison; and ever in his dreams the king beheld behind the purple curtain of his couch the assassin's hand clutching a dagger.

Doubtless this deplorable social condition belonged rather to the later than to the earlier days of Median greatness. It was after conquest and lust and satiety had destroyed

the fierce native nobility of the Medes that they exhibited the degrading vices peculiar to effeminate despotisms. When the rich capitals of Assyria opened their gates the hardy soldiers of the trans-Zagros fell quickly into gluttony and riotous excesses. And so, as has happened so many times in the history of mankind, the very victory of the Medes over their enemy furnished the insidious conditions of their overthrow. It only remained for Persia, grown great by the practice of the stalwart virtues, to turn the tables upon the Medes, softened by luxury, and do unto them as they had done to the enervated population of Nineveh and Asshur.

The Medes had little genius. In literary culture they achieved no distinction. No poem or historical fragment has been traced to a strictly Median source. Of their art but little is known. At Hamadan, the site of the ancient capital, has been found a single specimen of sculpture, the broken fragment of a colossal lion, which is believed to have been the product of a Median chisel. As far as may be judged from the appearance of this weather-eaten and mutilated torso, it is of the same style as that of Assyria. The body is about twelve feet in length, and the creature seems to have had something of the majesty of a sphinx.

No doubt the art of the Medes can best be judged by that of Persia. It is thought by critics that the great sculptures which adorned the capital of the Persian kings were imitated from those of Assyria; and if this be true, then it is evident that the artistic styles displayed in the ruins of Persepolis were brought thither by way of Media, and not directly from the West. The point in which originality may with most plausibility be claimed for the Medes is in their architecture, which, though suggestive of that of Assyria, is still sufficiently differentiated to be regarded as a distinct form. It is to be greatly regretted that some ruin of Azerbaijan or the Median plateau has not furnished the antiquary and the historian with more tangible and authentic evidences of the condition of art and science among our oldest kinsmen of Western Asia.

## CHAPTER XVII.—LANGUAGE AND RELIGION.



THE language of the Medes was Aryan. It was a branch of that great speech which has filled the world with its dialects, of which among the tongues of antiquity the Greek, and among those of modern times the English, are the most illustrious representatives. The Median language was closely allied to the Persian, being either the parent or the elder sister of that tongue; from which it happens that a fair notion of the speech employed by the subjects of Cyaxares may be obtained from an examination of the inscriptions of Persepolis. It is as though one should study Latin from Italian manuscripts.

It has been thought by some scholars that the famous Zendavesta, or bible of the Zoroastrians, is written in the language of the ancient Medes; but more careful investigation has shown that the language of the Zoroastrian scripture is older than that of Media, and that it is to be traced geographically to Bactria and Sogdiana. So, though it is probable that learned Medes could have read the books of Zoroaster, still it would have been brokenly and imperfectly, as an English student would read Anglo-Saxon, or an Italian, Latin.

It would be impossible at the present day and in the present state of knowledge to determine with precision the differences existing between the languages of Media and Persia. The fragments of the former speech which have descended to modern times are very meager, and consist mainly of isolated words from which the Median grammar can be but imperfectly reconstructed. The words which have been thus preserved are for the most part nouns, principally proper names, and these furnish but an indifferent clue to the real structure of the language.

Median names are almost identical with the Persian equivalents. In some instances the spelling is precisely the same. Thus Arbaces,

Artabazus, Harpagus, Ariobarzanes, Tiridates, and many other analogous names are without distinction in the two languages. In other cases the variation is so slight as to be of little importance, as Artynes for Artanes, Parmises for Parmys, Intaphernes for Intaphres, etc. In still another class the Median words, though not similar to any known Persian names, are clearly made up of Persian roots and combinations. To those who are acquainted with the physiognomy of languages this kind of evidence is conclusive proof of affinity between the tongues in which it exists. Such names as Ophernes, Sitraphernes, Mazares, Spitaces, Megabernes, and the like, are so clearly Persian in their typical structure as to be unmistakable by scholars, and yet these words are not known as the names of Persians. A fourth class, though having the Persic type, have no root-identity with any known words in that tongue, but are easily made out by comparisons with Zend and Sanskrit. It is as though Norman names, the equivalents of which could not be found in French, should be discovered in Italian or Spanish—a fact not at all inconsistent with the laws of linguistic growth and decay. Thus it happens that the names of the principal personages of Median history—Deioces, Phraortes, Astyages, and Cyaxares—are made up of parts not found in Persian, but are easily explained by Zend and Sanskrit roots. In like manner the meaning of many Median names of places may be traced in corresponding forms found in the older branches of the Aryan speech. Of this kind are the names of the principal cities—Ecbatana, Bagistan, Aspadan, etc.

Besides the names of persons and places only a few Median words have survived. The word for day was *spaka*. The heralds who carried messages to and from the king were called *angari*. One of the measures employed by the Medes was known as the *artabé*, and the Median robe was called *candys*. Two other words—*artades*, meaning “the just,” and



*devas*, meaning "the evil"—are of record as belonging to the Median dictionary; and here, so far as present scholarship can determine, our knowledge of the vocabulary of this ancient people is bounded. Only one other fact concerning the speech of the Medes is known, and that is the prevalence of the terminational particle *ak* in nouns. This ending seems to have been a kind of guttural suffix, which was gradually softened down and finally dropped altogether from the later development of the language in Persia.

That the Medes possessed the art of writing their language can not be doubted. In the First Book of Herodotus the story is told how Harpagus the Mede sent to Cyrus a letter concealed in the body of a hare. Several other references of like sort indicate the belief of the ancients that the art preservative of arts was known and practiced by the people of Media. Several passages in the Book of Daniel state specifically that King Darius wrote and signed the decrees which from time to time he issued "unto all peoples, nations, and languages;" and in the tenth chapter of Esther it is stated that there was kept at the Persian court a book containing the annals of the Median monarchs. But it is doubtless true that the native writings of this people were limited to political papers and royal messages, and that no national literature of any importance was ever produced. The people were a matter-of-fact and comparatively idealess race, and outside of the sacred lore in which their religious system was expressed, the world of letters was uncultivated—the world of thought unexplored.

In one respect, however, the Medes made a decided advance. The cumbrous and elaborate system of writing employed by the people beyond the Zagros mountains was greatly simplified by both the Medes and Persians. Instead of employing three or four hundred characters (some of them composed of as many as fifteen elementary strokes or wedges), the ancient Aryan scribes reduced their system to a manageable compass, based on an alphabetic analysis of sounds. In this effort at scientific writing they were comparatively successful.

The system which they thus produced embraced a list of twenty-three distinct sounds, expressed by thirty-seven characters, which was a nearer approximation to accuracy than has been attained by several modern nations. The characters, moreover, which were used in the Medo-Persic alphabet were much simpler in form than those employed by the peoples of the Tigris and Euphrates valleys. The elementary stroke in writing was the wedge, ▴. This character, except in the arrow-head variation (<), was always written either perpendicularly (▴), horizontally (▸), or inclined to the right (↗); and indeed the latter position was only employed as a mark of separation between words. Each letter was made up of a combination of simple strokes, the minimum in any one letter being two wedges, and the maximum five.

The Median writing was executed from left to right. The characters were produced between two parallel lines drawn horizontally across the stone tablet or parchment. Frequently, at the right-hand edge, the words were divided, and a part carried back to the beginning of the next line, after the manner of modern times. As in many other languages, there was great danger of mistaking one character for another. Several of the letters so nearly resembled others as to be indistinguishable in careless writing. A slight error in the use of the stylus or graving tool was sufficient to alter or confound the sense of a paragraph.

Whether the Medes employed a cursive or round hand is not known. If writing was a common art, much used by the people, it would appear probable that a continuous or running combination of the characters would have naturally taken the place of the slow and tedious elaboration of wedges. If, however, writing was limited in its practice to the king's counselors and scribes, then it is likely that no departure was made from the typical forms of the graven alphabet.

The materials used in writing were stone and parchment. The latter substance was employed in disseminating the edicts of the kings and for other similar purposes. For the more important statutes and records of

the Empire the face of the imperishable rock was used, and the scribe's chisel was the pen. The method of writing on clay tablets and cylinders seems not to have been known among the early Aryans of the Median plateau. Whatever writing they did was limited to the practical and necessary affairs of life; the voice of imagination found no utterance, the tongue of poetry no language.

Such was the speech of the Medes. As in the case of nearly all the other ancient peoples, the oldest records of this language are embalmed in the religious system which was formulated on the emergence of the race from barbarism. This system is presented in the *ZENDAVESTA*, though, as already said, the language of that great work is much more antique than that development of speech which prevailed in the days of Astyages.

The *Zendavesta* is in eight Books, covering the same general topics which are presented in the Old Testament—Laws, Covenants, Prayers, Songs, etc. In these we can see reflected with considerable clearness the hopes and aspirations of our ancestral race in its earliest communings with the gods. It was the blind effort of an unscientific age to interpret the phenomena of the world and to discover the Cause or causes of Nature. Perhaps the oldest part of this quaint Bactrian bible is the *Gáthás*, or "Songs," many of which are no doubt more primitive than the separate existence of the Medo-Persian race. They contain the unpremeditated and often fervid utterances of awe-struck worshipers, pouring out their praises and petitions to the invisible powers of the earth and air and sky. These powers were many rather than one, and possessed few—perhaps none—of the attributes of personality. There was at the first only one class of divine beings—the *Ahuras*, or gods. These were good, and were worshiped as beneficent and life-giving influences. It is believed that that system of dualism in which the bad powers of the universe are set over against the good was unknown to the earliest religion of the Aryan race.

The Powers, then, or Beings most worshiped by the ancient Bactrians were Indra, the Storm; Mithra, the Sunlight; Armati,

the Earth; Vayu, the Wind; Agni, the Fire; and Soma, Intoxication. These principles or forces of nature were the common objects of adoration before the earliest tribal separations of the Aryans—the deities alike of Hindus and Iranians. It was nature-worship, pure and simple, in the garb of polytheism. It was not long, however, before the perceptions grew by evolution, and it was seen that the powers of the physical world are harmful as well as helpful—bad as well as good. Upon the good principles of nature, therefore, the affections of the worshiper were turned and centered, while from the bad his gaze was averted, and by them his fears alarmed. Thus arose the good spirits and the evil—the *Ahuras* and *Deras*, the beneficent gods and the demons. Their worship was conducted by three classes of priests: the *Kavi*, or Prophets; the *karopani*, or Sacrificers; and the *ricikhs*, or Sages. The ceremonies consisted of hymns chanted in praise of the gods, in sacrifices of animals and fruits, and in libations and intoxication. Of the sacrifice a part was burnt upon an altar, the rest remaining to the priest; and in the ceremony of intoxication a portion of the liquor was poured out on the earth and the residue drunk by the *karopani*, who, when drunken, were thought to be in communion with the deity.

With the progress of religious ideas in Media, and the acceptance of the dualistic system of good and evil, there came also the concept of one god above the rest—a supreme and all-wise Intelligence by whom the other deities were held in subordination. This great God of the Medes was called *AHURA-MAZDÃO*, or *AHURAMAZDA*—the living Creator of all. His attributes were holiness, purity, goodness, truth, fatherhood, and happiness. He was the possessor and giver of all blessings, both temporal and everlasting. Earthly honor and preferment and spiritual elevation and wisdom alike flowed from this immortal Source of light and beneficence. Health, as well as virtue; wealth, as well as wisdom, came to the good from the bounteous hand of *Ahura-Mazdão*, and by withholding he punished the evil for their sin. He was a mighty and spiritual God, of whom no image or likeness



could be made, and before whose sight all vile and gross practices were an abomination. He had, in general, the same high godhood and attributes of personality which are ascribed to the Jehovah Elohim of the Pentateuch, and for this reason a strong national and religious sympathy existed between the Medo-Persic races and the Hebrews. Notwithstanding the intolerance of both peoples in matters of religion, the Jews under Persian rule never revolted, nor did the Persians at any time persecute their Jewish subjects. Both nations declared openly and with almost equal emphasis against the practices of idolatry, and both agreed upon the indivisible unity and almightiness of the Supreme Being.

Associated with Ahura-Mazdão were the angels. One was the great messenger and bearer of good news to men. His name was SRAOSHA. All the beneficence contrived above for the human family was revealed to man by this angel of light and blessing. He also kept the true faith from corruption, and after death brought home to celestial abodes the souls of the just. Besides this sublime personage, several of the divine attributes were represented as angels. Such were VOUH-MANO, "the Good Mind," and MAZDA, "the Wise," and ASHA, "the True," who are sometimes represented as personal, but generally as simple characteristics or qualities of the godhead.

Next after Sraosha among the angelic hierarchies was ARMATI, the goddess of the Earth. She was the Median Ceres, and like the Roman divinity, she kept alive the sentiment of piety. When the half-wild Mede contended with the thicket for the mastery of the soil, Armati encouraged him in his battle with perverse Nature, and when at last the harvest came she was the giver. The swelling seed, the growing stalk, the fragrant blossom, the ripening fruit—were not all these the blessings showered upon men by the angel of the fecund Earth? Wherever germination and birth revived the hope of the world, there Armati, the good genius sent by Ahura-Mazdão, was present to give and to inspire the delights which come of increase.

Thus by degrees from the older nature-worship of the primitive Aryans, the mind of

the Iranic peoples was called to the contemplation of Spirit and Duty. It was an advance from the form to the essence. The form was Wind, and Thunder, and Sunlight, and Fire; the essence was Truth, and Purity, and Wisdom, and Life. Even in those parts of the Median religious system in which the old symbolism was preserved there was a constant refinement, tending to the substitution of spirit for mere form. Thus the Earth was represented under the metaphor of the cow, and presently it was the *geûs urva* or soul of the cow that was addressed in worship. The earth was thus conceived of as pervaded by a directing principle of life—a soul—the "anima mundi" of the Greek philosophers.

The myth goes on to recite how when man, under the inspiration and direction of Ahura-Mazdão, first cut the breast of the Earth with a plowshare, the *geûs urva* cried out in anguish, and besought the high angels to save Armati from the pain and shame of desecration. But the high angels, knowing the will of Ahura-Mazdão, refused to interfere. Earth was left to suffer her pangs without alleviation, but was given in recompense of her sorrow the flowers and fruits and harvests.

For some reason the worship of MITHRA, the Sunlight, was not included in the oldest songs of the Zendavesta. In this the system of the Medes was discriminated from that of the Aryans of the Indus valley. With the latter the worship of the Sun-god was of the highest importance and popularity. With the Iranians, however, the introduction of Mithra into the pantheon belongs to a later date and a lower plane of religious thought. But not so of VAYU, the Wind. In the oldest hymns of the Zendavesta his praises are chanted and his godhead appeased with sacrifices.

The SOMA plant of the East is a species of *Asclepias*. The power of the expressed and fermented juice to produce intoxication was known from the earliest times. The pleasing thrill of delight which the drinker experienced, and the sudden exaltation of his faculties under the influence of the inebriating cup—were not these the gift of a god? What other power in all the earth could so bring

man into communion with the joyous divinities? Thus did Soma become the plant and drink of the deities. The gods in their revels and excesses grew drunken. So said the coarser theology of the people. But the Zoroastrian reformers were scandalized at the thought, and declared that the gods were sober, and that men were made into beasts by the power of Soma. Thus was a schism begun between the Aryans of the Median plateau, and their older kinsmen, the Brahmins, of India. For a while, after the Zoroastrian reform, the line was sharply drawn between the temperate theology of the Bactrian prophet and the license and abandonment of the older system of faith.

As already said, the Zoroastrian system of divinity recognized the existence of *devas*, or "fiends," as the antagonists of the gods. The latter were known by the general name of *ahuras*, or "deities." It was the system of dualism in its infancy. Good and evil were opposed. Out of the conflicting forces of nature the intellect of man worked its way backwards to antagonistic principles. It is interesting to note, moreover, how in the theology of the Bactrians and Medes a spirit of optimism prevailed over the pessimistic tendency of thought. The gods and the angels and good spirits were differentiated into individual character. They were arranged in orders and hierarchies, the one above the other, and were given names. Ahura-Mazdão was at the head. But not so of the *devas*. These were all grouped together. They had no individual names or characters. They were simply unclassified devils. There was no fiend-in-chief standing over against Mazdão, like Lucifer in the Miltonic theology. A *deva* was simply a *deva*—a malicious sprite disturbing the world and working mischief to the affairs of men.

Traces of the counter system of good and evil appear in the oldest hymns of the Zendavesta. The primitive Zoroastrians recognized the unceasing conflict between the powers of light and darkness. Truth and falsehood, purity and depravity, are set against each other. There were spirits of light and spirits of darkness. Nature had her storms and her

sunshine. Man vibrated between smiles and tears. But the bards and sages dwelt upon the joyful rather than the gloomy aspect of life. The good gods were adored more than the *devas* were feared.

At the outset much of the Medo-Bactrian system of dualism was traceable to the poetic language of the Zoroastrian sages. Abstract conceptions were personified. What was purely natural in the beginning became ideal in the imagination of the poets, and was then rendered concrete by personification. Natural philosophy became religion by ascribing the conflicts of nature to personal causes. Further on in the history of the system the dualistic belief rose higher, and in later times ventured to set up *ANRIMAN* as the foe and rival of Ahura-Mazdão. The world became a battlefield between the antagonistic powers of the air. Man was alternately aided and beset. Health and prosperity and happiness—gifts of the bright immortals—were shadowed by sickness, calamity, and sorrow—visitations of the spirits of evil and malevolence.

Then did the priests elaborate their system of dual theology and adorn it with decorations. They made out two great hierarchies, the one heavenly, the other infernal. The six leading attributes of Ahura-Mazdão were personified into six great deities. One was known as the "Good Mind." Another was the "Highest Truth," a third was "Wealth." To the fourth was given the name of the "White," or "Holy," while the fifth and the sixth were called respectively "Health" and "Immortality." Then the demon *Ahriman* was invented. He was the "Bad Mind." With him were associated as councilors *Indra* and *Shiva*—both from the pantheon of the Brahmins. Three other personified principles of evil were set in the Council of the Bad; and thus the armies of the air were marshaled to elevate or debase, to aid or destroy the children of mankind.

The faith of the Medes was by no means exclusively a religion of theoretic beliefs. There was much of practical ethics in the system. Human duty was clearly recognized, and its doctrines inculcated both by precept and law. The great cardinal principles of



right living were as well defined as by any of the pagan nations. Truth in word and purity in life were regarded as the foundations of society. Piety towards the gods and industry in honest endeavor were virtues without which life was worthless. It is in evidence that the Medes were capable of sound thought on moral subjects. Every action was traced to its motives and judged accordingly. Human conduct was weighed according to the thought which produced, the word which expressed, and the deed which embodied it. One of the most beautiful aspects of the system was that which carried morality into the ordinary pursuits of life. Sraosha expected of men that they should till the soil. It was a religious duty to do so. To destroy weeds and brambles was well pleasing in the sight of Ahura-Mazdão. To cut down thorns and to speak the truth were acts the same in nature and results. All the people were required to devote themselves in whole or in part to the work of tillage. Ahura-Mazdão expected it. Zoroaster taught it. Piety demanded it—not only this, but a filial obedience to the will of the True God and reverence for his holy angels.

The sacrifices of the Medes generally demanded the shedding of blood, but not the blood of men. The animal most offered was the horse. It was reckoned most pleasing to the deities that this noble creature should bleed before the altar. Oxen, sheep, and goats were also offered up as victims. The sacrifice was made by the priests. The flesh was held on high and waved before the sacred fire, and then the consecrated parts were eaten at a solemn feast.

"How happy art thou who hast come here to us from mortality to immortality!" Such were the words with which the archangel, Vohu-Mano, welcomed the soul of the righteous Mede into the abodes of the blest. For the soul of man was deathless. The spirits of the wicked and the good alike survived the shock of death. When the mortal pang was over the liberated soul—whatever might be its moral status—traveled a long and narrow path towards the unseen world. On the hither side of the gate of paradise was there the

"Bridge of the Gatherer." Who could go over it? Only the righteous. Them the angel Sraosha aided with his hand and his counsel. The bad fell off into the abyss. Upward to the throne of Ahura-Mazdão ascended the souls of the good. Before these were set the delectable joys of paradise. But all the evil spirits went down in outer darkness, to be chilled with bitter winds and to sit at poisonous banquets. Such were heaven and hell.

It does not appear that the earlier Zoroastrians believed in the resurrection of the body. At a later date, however, the doctrine was introduced and taught by the Magi. The later portions of the Zendavesta show conclusively that the belief in the raising up of the dead was a recognized dogma at the date of that part of the Median bible in which the references occur. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul was not involved with the notion of the resurrection, but existed as an earlier belief fundamental to the faith of the Medes.

The myths of Media were many and interesting. One of the most important was that relating to the origin and primitive state of man. The early condition of the human race was one of happiness. It was an Age of Gold. The people were ruled by KING YIMA. It was a land of sunshine and peace. Summer reigned; the vine flourished; blossoms filled the air. For a long time a contented and flourishing race honored their good king and lived without sorrow. By and by the aspect of nature changed. Winter came. The beauty of the world was destroyed by bitter frosts. Then King Yima and his people removed to another country more delightful than the first. In this land, according to the Vendidad, there was "neither overbearing nor mean-spiritedness, neither stupidity nor violence, neither poverty nor deceit, neither puniness nor deformity, neither *huge teeth* nor bodies beyond the usual measure." Whether of the flowers of the gardens, the fruits of the fields, or the cattle upon the hills, no other land was so beautiful and good as this second home of the primitive Aryans. It was the golden epoch, which the patriotic imagination of the poets has ever depicted as the first and most glorious state of the human race.

The second great mythical hero of the Medes was *THURETONA*. He was the Bactrian *Beowulf*—the slayer of dragons and exterminator of monsters. By him was slain the great devil *ZOHAK*, a mighty dragon, having “three mouths, three tails, six eyes, and a thousand scaly rings,” and who had his lair in the frozen peaks of the *Elburz*. A second myth gave an account of another dragon more ambitious and terrible than *Zobak*. The name of this second monster was *CNAVIDHAKA*. He boasted that he would convert the whole sky into a chariot, and that he would harness together *Ahura-Mazdão* and *Ahriman* and drive them as his horses through the heavens. Such a disgrace to the hierarchies, good and bad, was not to be tolerated or thought of. A third hero appeared on the scene, the inheritor of the renown of *Yima*, called *KERESASHA*. He slew the boastful dragon and gave peace to earth and sky.

These traditions of the ancient Medes give a tolerably adequate notion of the current and sweep of their myth-making powers and creative imagination. It is especially interesting to note that their legends are of the same general character as those presented in the poems of the Greeks and Romans—that is, heroic. Carrying the analogy further, it is easily discoverable that the traditions of the Teutonic nations of Northern Europe belong to the same epic catalogue of stories with those of the Persian plain and Indus Valley. *Keresaspa*, *Achilles*, *Æneas*, *Beowulf*, *Cœur de Lion*—they are all one in nature—all men rising by heroic exploits to the rank and fame of demigods. And this is another proof and illustration of the common origin and race affinities of all the Aryan families and tribes.

Thus it may be seen that the religion of the Medes, beginning with a tolerably distinct expression of monotheism and with peculiarly spiritual forms of worship, degenerated to a certain extent into that dualistic folly which makes the world to be warred for by conflicting principles of good and evil. The latter system embraced hierarchies of angels, and finally personified the adverse forces of nature into demons of high and low estate.

It yet remains to mention a third form of

religious faith adopted by the Iranic nations, and afterwards made famous in the literature of the West. This is the celebrated system of *MAGISM*. As the Medes in their epoch of power pressed their way to the west and north they came into contact with the Scythian tribes of Armenia and Kurdistan. In these mountainous regions was the seat of the Magian system. Here the fire-temples were built, of which not a few still stand as mute witnesses of one of the strangest aspects of the religious beliefs of mankind. The faith of the Magi can hardly be classified with any other ever accepted and taught by men. It made the elements of nature the direct objects of worship. It was not that some power presided over those elements that might be revered and adored, but the physical fact was itself the thing worshiped as divine. The elements of nature were four: fire, water, earth, and air. Of these the first was the most energetic and sublime. The consuming flame was the highest manifestation of the divine presence. Before this beautiful phenomenon in whose rapturous embrace the materials of the world melted into ashes, the awed worshiper stood in silent adoration. So the priest built an altar, and the sacred fire caught from heaven, was kindled and kept burning always. The priest was the *HOLY MAGUS*. No other might attend the altars or conduct the mystic rites. Through him only might the common worshiper approach the divine presence and be reconciled by prayer and sacrifice. The sacred emblem, flaming on the altar, inspired the profoundest awe and reverence. No breath of any mortal might be blown upon it without pollution. The burning of dead bodies was a horrid profanation. Of the sacrificial offerings only a fragment of fat was given to the flame.

The *WATER* was also sacred. The swift-flowing river or placid lake was defiled with any unclean touch of man. No drop of blood might mingle with the wave, and the laving of human hands left behind the stains of sin. In like manner the bosom of *EARTH* was holy. To profane the sacred soil was solemnly interdicted. No corpse might repose therein, nor any draff be thrown upon the divine ground.



Likewise was the Air adored and propitiated with offerings.

All the ceremonial of the Magian faith was conducted by the priests. The sons of Levi had not more exclusive jurisdiction over the altars of Israel than did the Magi over those on which were kindled the sacred fires of the East. Nor was the Magus himself unlike the Levitical priest. In person and apparel the two impressed the beholder as belonging to the same class of hierarchs. Both were members of a caste. Both inherited the priestly office from their fathers. Both exhibited a lofty manner and solemn air caught from the severe and lofty conceptions of their respective systems. The Magus wore a white robe and a stately miter, from which, on either side, depended a lappet, whereby the sides of the face were concealed. He bore in his hand a bundle of tamarisk twigs—the sacred emblem of his sacerdotal and prophetic office. By him thus clad and exalted in the eyes of the multitude the sacrifices were prepared and offered, and the libations of milk and honey poured forth before the fires of the altar. For hours together he chanted hymns and uttered mystical incantations. Before him even the king and the noble stood with humble tokens of reverence, while the common worshiper looked up awe-struck and trembling.

A strange practical question in the Median system of belief was the *post-mortem* disposition of human bodies. The dead might not be burned, for by that method the sacred fire would be defiled. Nor might a corpse be buried in the ground or consigned to the river, for in that case the one or the other of the elements would be polluted. Likewise to leave the body to be gradually resolved by the slow action of the atmosphere was a profanation of the fourth great object of worship. The last, however, seemed to be the least appalling profanation of the sacred elements, and was accordingly sometimes adopted. But a more general way was to expose the dead to be devoured by beasts and birds of prey; and this method is still followed by the GUEBRES of Persia and India. Round towers, called the Towers of Silence, and built according to a pattern prescribed in the Zendavesta, are

erected at various points, and on the tops of these circular towers, doorless and windowless, are set a kind of hoppers constructed of iron grates. Into these the bodies of the dead are thrown, and when the vultures and crows have stripped the skeleton bare and torn away the tendons, the bones drop through the grating into the inclosed space of the tower. The revolting features of this method, however, prevented its universal adoption at any period of Median history. As a kind of compromise between the humanity of the people and the rigor of the priests another plan was substituted, which consisted in covering the bodies of the dead with a layer of wax, so as to prevent contact with, and consequent defilement of, the earth.

The Magi claimed to have the gift of divination and prophecy. The bundle of tamarisk rods which they bore about with them was the symbol and means of their prophetic powers. The superstition of a divining agency in the rods seems to have been imbibed from the Scythians, whose priests used bunches of willow wands in ascertaining the things of the future.<sup>1</sup> The soothsayer was a popular character and was much sought after, as he ever has been and ever will be, until, in the slow evolution of civilization, the ignorant multitudes shall come to understand that the universe is governed by law.

Practically considered, the most valuable part of the Magian profession was that in which the priests were engaged in insecticide. The bad animals, the bad reptiles, the bad bugs,—were not all these the work of Ahri-man? So the Magus carried with him an instrument for the extermination of all the dragon's brood of small pests in the earth. It was made a religious duty resting upon the priests to impale and destroy what creeping thing soever caught his eye. Albeit, by the

<sup>1</sup> There is little doubt that the absurd water witchery of modern times is traceable to this far-off origin. The water witch of to-day is a lineal descendant of the Scythian Magus. The forked switch of witch-hazel has taken the place of the rod of tamarisk, and the frontier conjurer traverses the ground with the same serious face of perfect self-deception which the priest of Media wore a thousand years before the birth of Cæsar.

roadside, the river bank, the mouldering wall of palace or town, the Magi sat all day long in a ceaseless warfare with snakes and mice and lizards. Nor frog, nor worm, nor fly escaped the vigilant cruelty and inspired hatred of the zealous hierarch of the fire-altars.

Such were the principles and practices of Magism—the fire-worship of the Medo-Bactrian nations. It was a picturesque rather than a powerful type of religion. To see the white-robed and mitred priests on the mountain-

top, passing to and fro in solemn service before the altars on which were kindled the ever-burning fires, to hear them chanting weird hymns and uttering vague and awful prophecies, might well incite in an unscientific and half-barbarous age emotions of sublimity and fear—sentiments of awe and devotion. But the old spiritual power of the Zoroastrian faith could hardly be compared in its influence over life and conduct with the more showy formality of the Magian ceremonial.

## CHAPTER XVIII.—CIVIL AND MILITARY ANNALS.



**HETHER** the MADAI, mentioned in the tenth chapter of Genesis as constituting a branch of the Japhetic family, meant the race of the Medes, is a question not easily resolved.

The supposition, if allowed, would indicate for that race an antiquity much greater than can be deduced from the Assyrian records. In favor of this hypothesis of great antiquity may be mentioned the fact that elsewhere in the Old Testament the word *Madai* always signifies the Medes, and also the additional fact that Berosus succinctly declares that one of the earliest Chaldean dynasties, long before the rise of the Assyrian Empire, was *Median*. The narrative states that this Median line of monarchs in Lower Mesopotamia resulted from a conquest made by the warlike race dwelling beyond the Zagros.

This statement, made by the native historian of Chaldæa, carries double weight, in that it involves a humiliating subjugation of his own people by foreign armies—a statement which, unless it were true, would be forbidden by patriotism. The references by Berosus and the author of Genesis seem to point to the Medes as one of the primitive races of mankind, appearing on the horizon at a date as remote as two thousand years before the common era.

From these faint gleams of historic light

no more can be said than that the Medes were a very ancient people. Of their career in peace and war at that remote epoch nothing whatever is known. Veiled they are in the same impenetrable obscurity which darkens the beginnings of all human history. Negatively, the Zendavesta shows that at the date of the composition of that Iranic bible (about B. C. 1000) the Median race had not yet begun to be felt in the affairs of nations. Not until a century and a half after this date do the Medes actually emerge into the clear day of national life and activity. Before this time it can be said only with approximate certainty that this people had made a conquest in Chaldæa and established over that country a line of kings.

The actual annals of Media, then, begin with the latter half of the ninth century before the Christian era. At this time Shalmaneser II. was king of Assyria. This monarch, according to the records of his reign, made war into the country beyond the Zagros mountains, and while on one of his campaigns came in contact with the Medes. A portion of the territory of this people was devastated; but the Assyrian records do not indicate such resistance on the part of the Medes as would be expected from a great or vigorous nation. The war, on the contrary, seems to have been such as a powerful monarch would wage with scattered and badly organized tribes.

After the death of Shalmaneser and the



accession of his son, Shamas-Vul, a second Assyrian invasion of Media occurred. The offense of the Medes seems to have been merely the manifestation of a belligerent spirit. For this potentiality of war their country was again ravaged until Shamas-Vul and his army were satisfied, and returned through the mountain passes to Nineveh. It was in this hard school of destructive incursions that the Medes were taught their first lessons in resistance and revenge.

Assyria was now in the heyday of her power. To save themselves and their country from further depredation the Medes adopted the expedient of tribute. As the price of peace they agreed to pay an annual stipend. This policy was adopted in the reign of Vul-Lush III., about the close of the ninth century B. C. During the following one hundred years the Medes became more compact and populous. They lay like a cloud along the eastern horizon of Assyria. Doubtless the tribute had been paid only by those western tribes who had felt more than once the vengeance of the Ninevite kings. The tribes to the east had remained comparatively free from foreign domination.

In the meantime a growth of nationality had fired the spirit of the Medes, and the presence of that spirit gave the Assyrians warning that actual subjugation was necessary to the maintenance of their authority beyond the mountains. So Sargon the Great, in the year B. C. 710, determined to subdue the country and annex it to his dominions. Armies were marched through the mountain passes. Military posts were established and filled with soldiers. Whole colonies of Medes were deported into Assyria, and their places were supplied either with Assyrians or with captive bands of Samaritans, whom the monarch had recently brought home from his Western campaigns. Media was reorganized as a province of the Empire, and the tribute was systematically enforced, a part of the annual tax being a levy of horses for the stables of the king and for the captains of his armies.

The date of this subjugation of Media by Sargon corresponds almost exactly with the reign of the half-fabulous king DEŌCES, who,

according to Herodotus, became monarch of the Medes in B. C. 708. The account long received as true from the old Greek historian is now known to have no foundation in fact. On the contrary, at the very time assigned by Herodotus for the successful revolt of Media, under the leadership of Deŏoces, Sargon's armies were wasting the country and destroying its independence; and for sixty years after this event no serious insurrection occurred on the part of the subject people.

During this period the domination of Assyria was extended eastward to the Elburz and to the north-west into Azerbaijan. Wanton expeditions were made through the country both by Sennacherib and his son, Esarhaddon, and towns and cities on the remotest confines of Media were either destroyed or made tributary. Occasionally some nomadic chief, hovering with his lawless bands on the outskirts of the Empire, was seized and carried away as a curious spectacle for the gaze of the Ninevites. Such examples acted *in terrorem*, and the peace of the borders ceased to be disturbed.

About the middle of the seventh century B. C., we reach the solid ground in Median history. From the year 875 to 660 B. C., is the epoch of myth and fable. Soon after the latter date the great CYAXARES appeared on the scene, and his coming heralded a complete change in the condition of the countries beyond the Zagros. The beginning of this change was precipitated by the incursion of new Aryan tribes from the direction of Bactria. The incursionists were welcomed by their kinsmen, the Medes, who at heart detested the Assyrian power, and were but too glad to find in an augmented and fresh population both the occasion and the material of revolt.

Cyaxares placed himself, as by natural selection, at the head of this discontented host of his countrymen, and the power of Assyria was soon overthrown as far west as the mountains. The Scythian tribes still infesting this border country were reduced to submission, and the able and fearless Cyaxares set about the organization of an independent kingdom. Making his head-quarters and capital close to

the Zagros chain, he not only proved himself equal to the task of keeping the Assyrians at bay, but soon began to cast longing eyes through the mountain passes at the luxurious plains about Nineveh.

The political condition of Assyria was at this time of such sort as to invite invasion. Asshur-Bani-Pal, now in the thirty-fourth year of his reign, was, if not already in his dotage, less vigilant than in his youth. Perhaps there was mixed with the general lethargy a certain contempt of danger; for when had the big-muscled soldiers of Assyria had cause to fear an enemy? Nevertheless, an enemy was at the gate. Cyaxares, at the head of a large, courageous, but poorly disciplined army, poured through the mountains, and the Assyrian king was suddenly confronted with a host that could no longer be despised. But the aged monarch proved equal to the emergency. At the head of his army he met the Medes in the province of Adiabéné. A severe battle was fought, in which the old-time prowess of Assyria triumphed over the naked courage of the mountain soldiery of Media. The army of Cyaxares was terribly routed, and fell back pell-mell through the passes of the Zagros. The king's father, PHRAORTES, who, before his son's accession, had been in some sort king of the Medes, was slain in the battle.

The disaster was to have been expected. The Median army was a *mélange* of half-barbarians. What could they do against the war chariots of Nineveh? Nothing but be mowed down like a harvest. Cyaxares was quick to take in the situation. He saw that his defeat was directly chargeable to the constitution of his forces. Every chief had come at the head of his own clan, armed according to the rude resources of his province. Horse and foot were mingled. Bows and arrows, and spears, and slings, and darts made a medley of impotent weaponry. The king would remedy this condition of affairs, and by breaking up and reforming these heterogeneous bands of warriors, would marshal forth an army. It was not long till the vigorous spirit of the monarch had pervaded and fired both soldiers and people. Discipline flashed along the ranks, and the sting of recent defeat kindled the

anger of revenge. As soon as his mixed host of Medes and Scythians was brought into proper subordination, the king again set his face towards Assyria.

There was now an orderly invasion. Asshur-Bani-Pal took the field as before. The two armies met a short distance from Nineveh. The Assyrians were borne down before the new foe from the mountains, and were driven, after a decisive battle, behind the ramparts of the capital. Hard after them came the avenging Medes. A siege was begun, but before it had progressed to the extent of endangering the city, the attention of Cyaxares was suddenly recalled by a crisis in the affairs of his own country.

It was the SCYTHIANS. As already said the southernmost tribes of this barbaric race had been easily subdued by the Medes. The two peoples south of the Caucasus had to some extent mingled together. A part of the army of Cyaxares was Scythic. But the great body of trans-Caucasian Scyths had felt only so much of this Median ascendancy as to excite resentment. The hostile feelings of the north gathered head. While Cyaxares was still engaged with the Assyrians beyond the Zagros the Scythic host poured down into Azerbaijan and headed for Ecbatana. But Cyaxares hastily returning from Nineveh confronted them and prepared for battle. A savage conflict ensued, in which the reckless audacity of the Scythians proved more than a match for the disciplined forces of the Medes. Cyaxares was defeated, and he and his subjects were compelled to seek refuge in the walled towns and to sue for peace. MADYS, the Scythic leader, dictated terms, which were less severe than might have been expected from a barbaric chieftain victorious in battle. An annual stipend was imposed after the manner of civilized states, and Cyaxares was allowed to retain his crown, tributary to his conqueror. Doubtless the easy terms imposed by the triumphant barbarians was due to the fact that their incursion arose rather from the inspiration of the plunder than the lust of conquest. Albeit, the character of Media as a cold and upland region, with little accumulated wealth, was not such as to entice or long



retain a horde of the hungry and omnivorous beasts from beyond the Caucasus. The low-lying plains of the south-west, rich in fields of pulse and vineyards, were better calculated to appease the unappeasable maws of such savages.

The condition was now that of foreign domination and terrorism. The Scythians after their manner pitched their tents here and there over the country. Their flocks and herds were pastured on the lands of the subject Medes, who with mixed feelings of hatred and fear found themselves unable to thwart or stay the fierce wills of the barbaric leeches that had fastened on the veins of their country. In such a situation energy and industry were at a discount. The more a district was cultivated the more it was ravaged. The less cultivated parts fared better. The roving habits of the oppressors carried them from one region to another. The walled town was about the only refuge for the galled and desperate Medes, who were afraid to offer resistance either by stratagem or open revolt.

For some years the reign of terror continued until the Scythians by dispersion into various provinces became less of a scourge—less imminently dangerous to the subject people. By and by the invaders filed off in large numbers into Assyria, Babylonia, and Palestine, renewing their ravages everywhere to the very gates of Egypt. Many bands remained under their chiefs in Media, but the native subjects of Cyaxares began to breathe more easily, and their long smothered wrath rose in proportion as the danger disappeared. In this juncture of affairs the king himself determined to set the example of revenge and destruction.

Cyaxares made a feast. Treachery was mixed in the cups. The appetite of the Scythians became the means of their ruin and overthrow. The invited chiefs were plied with drink until they lay stupid, whereupon the hidden bands of armed Medes broke into the banquet hall, and slew them all without mercy. The sound of the murderous work was heard beyond the palace, and a popular fury broke out against the savage oppressors of the land. The incensed people took up

what weapons soever they could, and hewed right and left in a war of extermination. No records have been preserved of the struggle. It is known only that the Scythians were completely overwhelmed. Those who escaped the avenger's hand were driven through the passes of the Caucasus into their native haunts. So complete was the overthrow that scarcely a trace of the foreign domination remained in the country which the barbarians had held and ravaged for a period of years.

As soon as the Scythians had ceased to be a terror, the Medes renewed their project of invading Assyria. That great Empire had fallen into decrepitude. Saracus, the reigning monarch, was an unworthy successor of those mighty kings who for centuries had dominated the better parts of Western Asia. The outskirts of the kingdom lay open and invited attack. The resources at the command of Saracus were as little adequate to supply the means of resistance as was the king capable of hurling back an invader. As soon as Cyaxares could muster and discipline his forces, he entered with renewed energy upon the cherished plan of Assyrian subjugation.

At this time the viceroyalty of Chaldaea, which had been a dependency of Assyria for more than a half century, had recovered in some measure the influence and renown of her pristine era. The Assyrian yoke, though not especially galling, was nevertheless a yoke. No insurrections had occurred; but with the decadence of Assyria the elements centering at Babylon were rife for mischief. In this condition of affairs the Median invasion, led by Cyaxares in person, was precipitated. Before beginning his campaign, however, the king of the Medes took the precaution to test the loyalty of the Babylonian viceroy. That notable was in no mood to be virtuous, and readily yielded to the overtures of the Median king. It was arranged that an army of revolting Babylonians should march up the Tigris simultaneously with the approach of Cyaxares from the east. The Assyrians would thus be struck in flank and front, and the capital would stagger under the blow.

Meanwhile Saracus was informed of the

conspiracy. His weakness was spurred by alarm into such activity as his effete administration was capable of exhibiting. As the best expedient he divided his forces, sending one army down the river to resist the approaching Babylonians, while the main division under his own command was directed eastward to confront Cyaxares. Nabopolassar, the Babylonian governor, had in the mean time fallen without reserve into the arms of the Medes. He had been astute enough to discover at once the waning star of Assyria and the coming Median ascendancy. He also saw the advantages of his position, and especially his opportunity to set a high price upon his defection from Assyria. He accordingly proposed to Cyaxares, in answer to the overtures of the latter, that the conditions of his betrayal of his sovereign should be an alliance of fortunes between Media and Babylon; that he himself should continue ruler of the latter country; and that Cyaxares, as an earnest of good faith, should give his daughter Amyitis to be the wife of Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, and heir of the Babylonian vicereignty. To these conditions Cyaxares at once assented, and the double march on Nineveh began.

The campaign that followed was one of battles and vicissitudes. The combined army of Medes and Babylonians was met on the advance, and twice defeated by the aroused hosts of Assyria. Cyaxares fell back into the mountains, only to come again, and again suffer defeat. He and his ally then retreated into Babylonia, and were reinforced by fresh contingents from Media. A third advance was made. The Assyrian camp was surprised by night and ruinously routed. The broken fragments rolled back into Nineveh, and the victorious invaders advanced to the siege.

Once within the walls, the Assyrians felt secure, for, in expectancy of such a disaster, the city had been garrisoned and supplied with provisions and stores. For more than two years the awkward but dauntless besiegers beat around the invested capital. It was naked ferocity attacking a rock. But by and by Nature joined the conspiracy. With the rainy season of the third year the Tigris rose

bank full, and threatened to do what the clumsy enginery of Media seemed impotent to accomplish. The turbid tide rolled higher, beat the city bastions, and finally swept away the walls and let in the wolves of conquest. Sardanapalus—such is the tradition of the event—shrank into his palace, heaped up the antique splendors of his ancestors, mounted the pile with his wives and concubines, and perished in the flames.

Such was the fall of Nineveh and of the great Assyrian Empire. The collapse was complete. It only remained for Cyaxares and Nabopolassar to make such use of their victory as should secure the vast harvest of conquest. It seems that both the Median monarch and his ally were in a faith-keeping mood in the presence of their success. Instead of quarreling about the spoils of war they agreed to remain on terms of amity and divide the world between them. A division was accordingly made. Nabopolassar received Babylonia, Susiana, Chaldaea, and the whole valley of the Lower Euphrates spreading out towards Arabia and Egypt on the south-west. This the quondam viceroy and now king at once proceeded to organize into the kingdom of Babylonia—a power which will furnish the subject-matter of the following Book.

Cyaxares himself took what had constituted the Assyrian Empire proper, embracing all the northern portion of Mesopotamia and the provinces thereunto adjacent. This vast and important region, added to his own kingdom of Media, gave, not only territorially, but also as it respects population and resources, sufficient scope for the exercise of all the energies and ambitions of the victorious monarch. Thus out of the wreck of Assyria arose two separate and independent empires, Media on the east, and Babylonia on the south and west. And contrary to the natural expectancy excited by such a beginning, the two powers, instead of broils and war, continued to cultivate the friendliest relations.

Cyaxares had conquered Nineveh, but had not conquered a peace. The elements of hostility were active in his dominions. The Scythians who had been thrown off from his own kingdom of Media were aggregated in bands



in various parts, and were led to depredations by chiefs of greater or less ability and ambition. Besides, the northern provinces of Assyria, long time restless under the oppressions of the Ninevite kings, sought eagerly in the downfall of Saracus an occasion and opportunity of revolt. Doubtless Cyaxares himself had grown warlike, and was not displeased at the hostile turbulence which promised further gratification to his ambition. He accordingly entered upon a career of conquest which extended, through many vicissitudes of victory and defeat, over a period of more than ten years.

The general excuse for the wars which followed was that common foe of the times—the Scyths. To pursue these barbarians into what territories soever they might have invaded was claimed as a just measure of revenge on the part of Cyaxares. Albeit, in many instances the Median king was hailed, even at the head of a consuming army, as a deliverer from the scourge of Asia. But in those provinces and countries in which the inhabitants were of Turanian origin, and therefore of nomadic habits, the people frequently made common cause with the Scyths in the attempt to beat back the more civilized advance of Cyaxares and the Medes.

The two countries against which the arms of the Median king were first directed were Armenia and Cappadocia. These vast districts, half-organized out of barbarism, were still inhabited by native tribes, together with large numbers of invaders precipitated from various regions. Some of these belonged to the Turanian race; others were Aryans; many were Scyths—a wavering mass of savages and robbers.

The first of these two countries had been a nominal dependency of Assyria. The Armenians had borne the yoke and waited their opportunity. The high mountains and impenetrable fastnesses of the region gave a natural barrier to invasion, but the will of Cyaxares surmounted the ramparts of nature and the Armenians were subdued in a vigorous campaign. Cappadocia lay still more remote, but the Mede paused not until not only this country but also the far-off tribes of Colchians,

Iberians, and Moschi were brought into subjection. By these conquests the borders of the Median Empire were extended on the north to the Caucasus, and on the west to the river Halys. It does not appear that the campaigns were bitterly waged or long continued. The races with whom Cyaxares contended were accustomed to mastery by some military power, and that of the king of the Medes was not more odious than had been the domination of the Assyrians.

More important by far was the next campaign of Cyaxares, directed against the kingdom of Lydia. To enter this country he must cross the Halys—the Rubicon of Asia Minor. The pretext for doing so was the pursuit of the Scythians; but the Lydians readily divined the real motive and made preparations for resistance. A league was formed among the princes of Asia Minor to oppose the further progress of the Medes to the west.

These formidable preparations rather incited than cooled the purpose of Cyaxares. He summoned the Babylonians to his aid, and gathered from various provinces contingents of troops and provisions. With a great army he marched westward, and began the invasion of Lydia. He found in Alyattes, king of that country, a foeman worthy of his steel. It was no longer a campaign against semi-savages, but a regular military combat between opposing armies. Success varied from side to side. Several hard battles were fought, and in more than half of the conflicts the Lydians were victorious. In one instance a general and hotly contested engagement took place *in the night*. For six years the war continued, until at last superstition ended what the lust of conquest had begun. In the midst of a hard fought battle, while the heated combatants were absorbed in the work of death, a mysterious shadow crept over the face of Nature. The sunlight grew dim and cold in the dust of battle. A solar eclipse (B. C. 610) was hanging an ominous curtain over the heavens. A sudden awe fell on the armies; then silence; and then, as the darkness deepened, horror and quaking. An unscientific age fears not man but the gods.

The battle was at an end. Nabopolassar

of Babylon, on the part of the Median monarch, and Syennesis, king of Cilicia, on the part of the Lydian allies, came forward on the field and made mutual proposals of peace. The threatening heavens made the negotiations easy. It was agreed to end the war on the spot. The Scythians were forgotten. The dominions of Alyattes were to be left intact by his friend, the king of the Medes. All things were to be as they were before, and some things better. For the two amiable sovereigns ratified the compact by marrying Aryenis, the daughter of the Lydian king, to the young Astyages, son and heir of Cyaxares. And to make all things sure, each of the kings punctured his arm and gave the bleeding wound to the lips of the other. Each of the friends drew the life of the other from the wound. Alas, for the deeds of the past.

It is proper in this connection to give some account of the previous history of the country with which the Medes were thus brought into contact. The kingdom of *LYDIA* was one of the most ancient of all Asia Minor. Tradition pointed to an origin at least seven hundred years before the time of Cyaxares. Three dynasties of kings had ruled the nation, the *Atyadæ*, the *Heraclidæ*, and the *Mermnadæ*. Of the first house there had been four kings; of the second, twenty-two; of the third, four—thirty recorded reigns, besides several conjectural. The most ancient name of the country was *Mæonia*, and the people were called *Mæonians*; but under *LYDUS*, the second of the *Atyad* kings, the name was changed in his own honor to *Lydia*.

The Lydian legends were full of great pretensions. One tradition recited that both *Belus* and *Ninus*—the mythical founders of *Babylon* and *Nineveh*—were Lydian princes sent forth to establish kingdoms in *Mesopotamia*. Colonies had been planted—so said the myths—in the remotest parts of the world. Such an origin was claimed for the *Etruscans* of Italy, and for other primitive states of the west of Europe. A Lydian general, named *Ascalus*, had led an army to the extreme south-west, and built the city of *Ascalon* in *Syria*.

The more authentic annals of *Lydia* go

back to about the beginning of the ninth century B. C. It is probable that the two dynasties, the *Heraclidæ* and the *Mermnadæ*, were different branches of the same house. So much is indicated by the feuds between them and by the common names occurring in both lists of kings. The later *Heraclide* monarchs had treated the princes of the *Mermnadæ* with injustice, born of distrust and jealousy; and this wrong grew to such proportions that the *Mermnads* were obliged to seek safety in exile.

Their partisans, however, maintained their cause, and anon the banished leaders returned, put the *Heraclide* king to death, and established their own chief, named *Gyges*, on the throne of *Lydia*. This revolution, occurring in the beginning of the eighth century, marked the commencement of a new era of vigor and prosperity of the kingdom. It was from this time that the wealth of *Lydia* became proverbial throughout the known world. *Gyges* himself was one of the richest rulers of his epoch. Magnificent gifts were sent by him to the oracle of *Delphi*, in *Greece*. *Sardis*, his capital, was a rich and luxurious city, and in both art and commerce his kingdom had great fame. Nor was his reputation less warlike than that of his predecessors. He advanced his arms to the *Ægean*, thus coming into conflict with the Greek colonists of *Asia Minor*, most of whom he subdued and made tributary to his kingdom. All the western coasts looking out towards the *Mediterranean* felt his power and acknowledged his greatness.

The kingdom of *Lydia* was not free from the common calamity of the times. The trans-Caucasian barbarians were not likely to overlook a field so promising in plunder. From this direction came the fierce *Cimmerians*, spreading terror and ruin through the country. *Gyges*, having first sought and obtained the help of the *Assyrians*, gave battle to the invaders, and inflicted a decisive blow. Of the routed *Cimmerians* many were killed and many taken prisoners, of whom not a few were sent as a present to *Asshur-Bani-Pal* at *Nineveh*. In a second war with the same rude and turbulent race fortune completely forsook the banners of the king. He himself was slain in a great battle, and the people and soldiery



were obliged to seek refuge in the walled towns. Fascinated by the fabulous wealth of Sardis, the barbarians besieged the city, and after a long investment, succeeded in breaking in and reducing every thing to ruin. Only the citadel held out against the vengeance of the furious men of the North.

A period of prostration followed this overthrow. The Asiatic Greeks dependent on Lydia recovered their freedom. The emancipation of the coast cities, however, was but of brief duration, for in the next reign after that of Gyges the Lydians had already sufficiently recovered from the Cimmerian ravages to continue and maintain their conquests in the extreme west of Asia Minor. The cities of Smyrna and Miletus were taken, and the territory of Clazomenæ devastated in a successful campaign conducted by the Lydian king.

After Gyges the most distinguished ruler of Lydia was his great-grandson, ALYATTES. This monarch undertook the work of expelling the Cimmerians and their descendants from the kingdom. Large districts were almost exclusively inhabited by this people. Contact with civilization had somewhat modified their warlike habits, but they were still sufficiently vengeful to be an object of terror as well as of aversion. To expel these intruders at once and forever was not an easy task, but was less so than when in the time of active invasion they were fresh in their native ferocity. Alyattes succeeded in clearing not only his own kingdom, but all Asia Minor of the scourge that had so long threatened and lashed the nations of Western Asia. Lydia, Bithynia, Paphlagonia, Phrygia, and Cilicia were all freed from the terror which had oppressed them.

A great cause of the prosperity and wealth of the Lydian kingdom was the natural fertility of the country. No other of all Asia Minor had so rich a soil. Not only was this true of the field and glebe and orchard, but the sands also yielded their treasure. The bed of the Pactolus, flowing through the capital, glittered with gold. In this fact is founded the well authenticated claim of the Lydians to be regarded as the inventors of

coined money. They were a frank and merry people, having great sociability and not a little artistic taste. The game of ball, which for more than two thousand years has been the *dernier ressort* of the boys of the world, is said by Herodotus to have been invented by the sport-loving Lydians. So also of dice and several other popular games which still survive. They were musicians, having many peculiar instruments on which they produced sweet and plaintive melodies. In the active sports and in the discipline of war they were second only to the Assyrians and Medes. In the management of the horse they greatly excelled. The cavalry wing was an important branch of the Lydian army, and long before the time of Alyattes the cavalrymen of the service numbered thirty thousand.

After the Battle of the Eclipse, Western Asia presented three great kingdoms: Media, Babylonia, Lydia—all at peace. The princes and princesses of the three powers were intermarried, and the affinities thus established, strengthened by treaty stipulations, furnished strong bonds of amity. Aryenis, the daughter of Alyattes and sister of Cræsus, was married to Astyages, the crown prince of Media; and Amyitis, the sister of Astyages, was wedded to Nebuchadnezzar, the heir apparent to the throne of Babylonia. Nor were the royal brothers-in-law in such proximity of territory as to be much vexed with each other's minor movements and ambitions. Ecbatana, Babylon, and Sardis stood well apart, and opportunity was thus given to the members of the three royal houses to love and admire each other—at a distance.

Thus, after the crisis of B. C. 610, a half century of peace elapsed. The previous times had been filled with turbulence and bloodshed. For more than five hundred years there had not been such an epoch of quiet as that which followed the treaty between Cyaxares and Alyattes. All three of the monarchies grew strong, prospered, flourished. Even the dependent provinces, not greatly distressed with tributes, felt the glow of peace. In the whole of Western Asia there was a marked advance in the elements of civilization. The only disturbance of these

peaceful tendencies was from the direction of Syria and Egypt. In this quarter there were several hostile movements which broke the quiet of Babylonia.

With the revival of Egyptian affairs under Psametik I., the old ambition of the Pharaohs to dominate the East returned. Actuated by this motive, the king just mentioned, extending his power in the direction of Palestine, besieged and captured the city of Ashdod, and thus established himself in a strong fortress beyond the limits of Africa. Following up this advantage, Pharaoh Necho, son and successor of Psametik, overthrew Josiah, king of Judah, in the battle of Megiddo, and afterwards, making head towards the Euphrates, took Carchemish, and compelled the submission of nearly the whole of Syria. The provinces thus overrun, however, had fallen to Nabopolassar at the division of the Assyrian Empire, and thus the Babylonians were aroused to the defense of their rights.

Nebuchadnezzar made haste to punish the intrusion into his kingdom. At the head of his army he advanced against Necho at Carchemish, overthrew him in battle, and drove him precipitately out of the country. Egypt in turn was made to feel the heel of invasion, and the Babylonian borders were established to the very gates of Pelusium. In all these Syrian wars of Nebuchadnezzar he was backed and assisted by his brother-in-law, Astyages, king of the Medes.

Meanwhile the aged Cyaxares, the virtual founder of Median greatness, died. He was one of the great men of his times. Statesmanship can hardly be ascribed to a ruler of that era; but Cyaxares had ambition, and was able to govern men. He could foresee an end from the beginning, and could adapt thereto the means most likely to secure the desired object. King of a warlike people, he showed himself fit to lead. First in a warlike age, he maintained his ascendancy to the end of life. By his conquests and abilities he brought to his people the materials of a great kingdom; but to organize those materials into institutions befitting a commonwealth was a work of which neither he was capable nor his times desirous. His success, therefore,

as a conqueror and a king lacked the element of stability. The greatness of his reign was the greatness of inorganic power supported by personal will rather than by administrative forms or political wisdom. After a reign of forty years he passed from the scene of his activities, and was succeeded by ASTYAGES.

The accession of this prince was in the year 593 B. C. Though not wanting in abilities, he was less ambitious than his father. It is more easy to inherit an empire than to win one; but inheritance is not a fact well calculated to develop the highest powers of manhood or kingship. Nor was the court of an oriental monarch a place to inspire those generous activities, without which great character is impossible.

The long reign of Astyages was comparatively uneventful. The most important occurrence of his whole career—if we except the disaster of its close—was an addition of territory, which he had the good fortune to secure rather by diplomacy than by war. On the north-eastern borders of Media lay the country of the Cadusians. They possessed not a little power and influence. More than once Cyaxares had thought to make war and subdue them; but his Western campaigns had drawn him away to larger enterprises. If the Cadusians were a temptation to the Medes, the Medes were a menace to the Cadusians. At the time of the accession of Astyages they were ruled by a king named ONAPHERNES, who, believing his country to be in danger, took wisdom into his counsel, and opened negotiations with the Median monarch relative to annexation. This odd piece of statecraft was successful; for Astyages was an easy-going king, who preferred peace to war, and was very willing to make terms with the Cadusian ruler. So without bloodshed the dominions of that barbaric but politic prince were transferred to Media, himself remaining as viceroy.

This stroke of good policy was perhaps the greatest achievement of Astyages. His social life was clouded, for he was sonless. His Lydian wife, Amyitis, had brought him no heir. Other wives were sought; but no son came to the palace of Ecbatana. At last Tigrania, a beautiful princess from Armenia,



sister of Tigranes, king of that country, was given to the Median king; but no son came with the gift. So as the monarch grew old, it seemed not improbable that the throne would be left without an occupant—a calamity to be greatly dreaded in those times and countries, where the king is the state. Nor is it unlikely that in the present instance the childlessness of Astyages was a circumstance of his final overthrow.

In civil affairs the method of government adopted by the Median kings differed not greatly from that of Assyria. The general character of the royal court was the same as that of Nineveh. The monarch, except when called forth to war, was not seen in public. His seclusion was guarded by an elaborate retinue of court officers—mostly eunuchs. In dress the luxurious style of the Ninevite kings was adopted. Long robes of costly texture adorned the bodies of the courtiers, and the sovereign himself was magnificent. The halls of the palace flashed with many-colored garments, red and purple, adorned with gold and gems. The wrists of the officers were clasped with thick bracelets, and their necks with heavy chains.

An audience with the king of Media could only be obtained through an elaborate ceremony. The monarch had one officer called his "Eye." Another high worthy had the duty of conducting strangers into the majestic presence. A third bore his cups; a fourth was his herald. After these were the guards of the palace, the torchbearers, and the ushers according to their several ranks.

As in Assyria, the chief sport of the monarchs of Media was hunting; and to this end public parks were established near the capital, into which were brought multitudes of wild animals, such as the kingly fancy delighted to pursue. At intervals the somewhat restricted excitements of the parks were exchanged for the freedom of the open country, when the king and his court went forth to hunt at will.

One of the principal events of the reign of Cyaxares had been the establishment of Magism as the court religion. The priests of this faith were held in the highest honor, and they made themselves constantly necessary to

the superstition of the royal household. The king's dreams must be interpreted. Omens and portents must be explained. Matters of state policy must be laid before the supernal powers. Who but the Magi should attend to these mysterious offices? Astyages, like his father, encouraged this priestly caste; gave them honors; made them influential in his government. Thus was developed in the state another antecedent of its destruction. For, as will be presently seen, religious zeal against the prevailing customs of the court fired the enemies of Astyages in the day of his overthrow.

As the unwarlike king of the Medes grew old, destiny prepared for him and his kingdom a common catastrophe. Up to this time the kingdom of Persia, lying to the south and east of Media, had attracted but little attention from any of the surrounding nations. What the relations of that country were to the Median monarchy under Cyaxares is not very clear. Perhaps the Persians, governed by native rulers, had held a sort of natural dependence on the court of Ecbatana. Being of the same race with the Medes they enjoyed some immunity from invasion. Indeed, there was less in the highlands of Persia to tempt the cupidity of a conqueror than in almost any other of the regions bordering on the Median Empire. The habits and manners of the two peoples were alike, and the general motives of war were for the most part wanting between them. No doubt there was a certain dependency—political, and perhaps tributary—of the Persian upon the Median kings, but the former as well as the latter were hereditary monarchs, and *claimed* distinguished relationships with the most honored royal families of Western Asia.

Such was the condition of affairs when, during the reign of Astyages, the young Persian prince CYRUS was a resident at the court of the Mede. He was here to observe, to be educated, to learn refinement of manners, and especially to be indoctrinated with the great lesson of subordination to the powerful monarch to whom he himself, on his accession to the throne of Persia, was expected to be a loyal subject.

It sometimes happens, however, that a young man of genius learns more than is intended by his masters. He may come to apprehend that they are living upon the renown of the past, that their wisdom is dust, and their lessons slavery. So thought Cyrus at the court of the king of the Medes. A reign of vice had succeeded a reign of vigor. The luxury of Assyria had effeminated both the king and his subjects.

The young prince of barbaric Persia was himself fresh from the hills. He despised the kind of life which he beheld around him. He saw the great king of the Medes immersed in banquets, attended by a retinue of despicable eunuchs, caressed by concubines, and amused by dancing-girls. Ecbatana was a revel, and the king's palace a debauch. Moreover the simple religious faith of Cyrus, schooled as he had been in the doctrines of Zoroaster, was shocked with what appeared to him the hollow mockeries of Magism. His father's house, the Achæmenian princes of Persia, taught not, tolerated not, the gross and unspiritual practices of the Priests of the Fire. Doubtless Ahura-Mazdão was angry at the Median idolatries, and was only waiting to destroy.

In these circumstances Cyrus, pent up at the court of Astyages, found abundant food for rebellious thoughts. He longed to escape from his surroundings, and to lead an insurrection in honor of his country and his religion. His position, however, was virtually that of a hostage, and he was jealously watched and guarded. In his anxiety he applied to Astyages for leave to return to Persia. He alleged that his father, the Persian king, was old and feeble, and required to be cared for by his son and heir. Astyages refused the plea. He so greatly admired and loved the youth that he could not endure his absence from the palace! Cyrus thereupon sought an intercessor. A favorite attendant of the king pleaded with him that the young man might be allowed to depart. Permission was at length obtained, and with a few attendants the prince set out from the Median capital.

The mind of the fearful is always haunted with dread and superstition. After the de-

parture of Cyrus, Astyages sat at a banquet. The wine flowed, and the dancing-girls were merry. The king demanded a song. One of the girls—or as some say, a minstrel—took up a lyre and chanted this ominous prophecy:

The lion once had the wild boar in his hall,

But he let him depart to his own;

He has broken the meshes that held him thrall,  
And, behold, how the boar has grown!

He will wax, and grow great, and return at length,  
And the lion has need to defend,

For the boar will o'ermatch him in courage and strength,

And tear him in pieces and rend!

The king of the Medes was not so drunken as to hear this prophecy with equanimity. He was thrown into alarm, and instantly ordered a company of his guards to follow Cyrus and bring him back to the palace. The prince was overtaken and captured. The king's orders were made known, and Cyrus consented to return. That night, however, he made his captors a feast, and while they were in the stupor of drink he mounted his horse and escaped to the outposts of Persia. There he took command of a body of soldiers, and when the guards of Astyages, awaking to find their prisoner fled, pursued and again overtook the fugitive, it was only to find him at the head of a force equal to their own, to be routed by him and driven back into Media. Cyrus then made good his escape to his father's court and found protection in the Persian army.

Astyages was terrified and enraged at the result. He beat his body and very properly declared himself a fool for having yielded to the solicitations of his courtier and permitted the escape of Cyrus from his clutches. He resolved, however, to recover by force the advantage which he had lost by carelessness. He summoned his generals and immediately gave orders for a great invasion of Persia. The largest Median army ever mustered was at once collected. Tradition numbers three thousand war-chariots, two hundred thousand horse, and a million of infantry as the terrible array which Astyages deemed necessary to recover a young man whom he could recently have destroyed by a nod. The Mede put himself at the head of his host, and the invasion of Persia began.



Cyrus and Cambyses, his father—king of the Persians—prepared resistance. They had a hundred chariots of war, fifty thousand horsemen, and two hundred thousand infantry. Willing with this comparatively small force to anticipate the movement of his enemy, Cambyses marched boldly to a frontier town of his dominions and awaited the onset. The

a mortal wound. The Persians were attacked in front and rear and only succeeded in saving themselves by flight. The array retreated in broken fragments and fell back on Pasargadæ, the capital. After burying his dead rival the king of the Medes pressed on to make an end by destroying at one blow the metropolis and the kingdom.



CYRUS THE GREAT.

Drawn by W. Camphausen.

Medes joined battle, and for a whole day the conflict raged without decisive results; but on the second day superior numbers gave the advantage to Astyages. Detaching a hundred thousand men he sent them to the rear of the town, and while the Persians were absorbed in the main contest the stronghold in their rear was assaulted and taken. In defending the fortifications Cambyses himself received

The stress of their affairs brought out the best qualities of the Persians. Cyrus, who on his father's death was recognized as king, displayed remarkable heroism. Before Astyages could reach the capital, the Persian had reorganized his army, and advanced to meet him. The country between the field of the first battle and Pasargadæ was rough and hilly, and the Median advance was conse-

quently retarded. The circumstance gave to Cyrus an opportunity to select his own ground of defense. A most advantageous situation was accordingly chosen. A narrow defile, with lofty hills rising precipitously on either side, was found in the Median line of march, and seized by the Persians. Ten thousand picked troops were placed in the pass, and against these the Medes flung themselves in vain. Astyages, however, adopting his former tactics, detached a division of his army, and succeeded in gaining the heights above the defile, and the Persians were thus forced to a hasty retreat. But in another range of hills nearer to the capital they secured a similar, though less defensible, position, and again awaited the onset.

With the coming of Astyages another two days' conflict ensued, more terrific and more decisive than the first. The hills which the Medes must ascend, driving the Persians, were steep, and the slopes were covered with thickets of wild olive. For a whole day the host of Astyages beat in vain against the obstacles. The Persians held their position undaunted, discharging showers of missiles and hurling down great masses of stone upon the ranks of their assailants.

On the second day the overpowering numbers of the Medes began to tell in their favor. Astyages placed one division of his army behind those files which were ordered to the charge, and commanded those in the reserve lines to urge forward those in advance, and to kill all who gave way before the Persians. In this way it was contrived that the terror behind was as great as the danger before. To fall back was certain death; to advance was possible victory. Before their assailants, maddened by this merciless alternative, the Persians lost ground for a while, and were driven to the very summit of the hills. Here their wives and children, who were more secure with the army than in the capital, began to fling up their arms and cry out with mingled tears and reproaches against that weakness which seemed ready to expose them to capture. Stung by these outcries, and roused to the desperation of valor, the Persians made a sudden rally, and flung themselves with the

recklessness of death upon the advancing foe. Sixty thousand of the Medes were borne down by this extraordinary onset. The voice of woman had risen above the roar of battle, and the arm of Persia had thrust back the foe.

The victory thus gained was indecisive. The Persians were relatively too weak to make the overthrow complete. Astyages succeeded after some maneuvers in gaining a position in the immediate vicinity of the capital. He was preparing to strike a final blow at his antagonist, when the latter, anticipating the movements of his enemy, fell suddenly on the Median camp. It was the fifth pitched battle which had been fought between the opposing armies. Gaining something by the surprise and much more by the impetuosity of his attack, Cyrus cut right and left into the heart of the Median bivouac. Panic and rout ensued, and the fugitive remnants of the army of Astyages were pursued in all directions. The victory was complete and overwhelming. The chiefs and generals of Cyrus gathered around him on the battle-field, and proclaimed him KING OF MEDIA AND PERSIA.

Astyages made good his escape and fled towards Ecbatana. He was accompanied by a small body of friends who still adhered to his fortunes; but the company was overtaken by the eager and vigilant Cyrus, who routed the band and captured the king. It was Astyages who had added cruelty to folly and wickedness to disaster by punishing and putting to death several of his generals, upon whom he laid the blame of his overthrow. This despicable conduct, added to much previous imbecility, created a wide-spread disaffection, and large numbers of the leading Medes were ready to hail Cyrus as a deliverer. The fact that there was no legitimate heir to the Median throne tended to reconcile the people to their recent disaster, and to incline them to accept a Persian prince as their ruler.

Thus, in the year 558 B. C., was the great monarchy established by Cyaxares brought to a sudden end. The king was the state, and the king was a prisoner. Ecbatana surrendered without a defense. The dependent provinces sent in embassies and tendered their submission. In a short time the authority of



Cyrus was as completely established in the north as in the south. That large proportion of the Medes who favored the Zoroastrian reform were satisfied; for Magism was overthrown. The ambitious, who had fretted under the effeminate government of Astyages, were secretly pleased at the prospect of manly vigor in affairs of state. The philosophic were content; for they saw in the revolution only the transfer of authority from one royal house to another. The patriotic were not offended, for they remembered that the princes of Persia and Media were kinsmen—nobles of the same blood and the same family. Perhaps no conquest of history has brought less disturbance to the vanquished state than did the overthrow of Media by the arms of Cyrus.

The inquiry naturally arises why the allied kingdoms of Babylonia and Lydia were not involved in the stirring and critical movements just described. Perhaps the first answer is to be found in the suddenness of the circumstances which precipitated the Medo-Persian war. Scarcely could the news of the passion of Astyages against Cyrus and the rapid invasion of the dominions of Cambyses have been borne to Babylon and Sardis, until other intelligence would have followed of the annihilation of the Median army and the overthrow of the monarchy. Sovereigns were more ready to send succor to a king at the head of his army than to a captive in the hands of his enemy. Especially would this be true of the king of Lydia, whose remote capital could hardly be expected to send a contingent to so great a distance. As to Babylonia, Nebuchadnezzar, king of that country and brother-in-law of Astyages, was already dead, and could no longer recognize old obligations. Neriglissar, who at the time occupied the palace of Babylon, was himself a product of revolution, and an enemy of that house which had maintained the alliance with Media. So Astyages was left to his fate, and his fate was—Cyrus.

We thus have the spectacle of a vast empire which arose suddenly, and was more suddenly extinguished. In territorial extent this great power surpassed the combined areas of Great Britain, France, Spain, and Portugal.

In richness of soil and fertility of resources Media fully equaled Assyria, with her seven hundred years of history. The mettle of the people was by nature equal to the demands of great nationality, and no incentive to the highest ambition seems to have been wanting in the character and surroundings of the race.

The causes of the sudden eclipse of Median promise must be sought on the side of political weakness and social barbarism. The inherent vice of personal, and therefore irresponsible, government, identifying the nation with the king, and wrapping up the destiny of the former in the personal and capricious destiny of the latter, rendered every thing precarious. After this the greatest element of weakness was the want of political unification among the various kingdoms and provinces which were successively absorbed into the Empire. The administration of the Median kings seems never to have embraced any rational measures for the reduction of their various peoples into a homogeneous nation. The organization of the government was so crude and imperfect as to furnish no guaranty of security; and the king in his methods of exercising and dispensing authority was a mixture of the oriental despot and the barbaric chieftain. Successful war is a necessary condition of the perpetuity of such a government. When that fails, or when the monarchy falls into the hands of an imbecile, the state goes headlong.

To these causes must be added the general decline of the warlike spirit of the Medes and their degeneration into vice. The court set the example. Astyages was by constitution averse to that kind of severe and adventurous enterprises upon which the martial spirit is fed and nurtured. Nor did he, like Caesar, possess the sublime abilities of peace. He gave himself up instead to the careless and reckless indulgence of appetite and passion. It was Charles Stuart succeeding Cromwell—an age of lasciviousness following hard after an age of austerity and the rough, but solid, virtues of war.

The vicious tendencies of the Median court were caught up and diffused by the nobles. To outdrink and outcarouse the king was the

highest flattery which the courtier could pay to his master. And so, percolating through the higher ranks of society, the insidious streams of vice and immorality descended to the common people and poisoned the national life.

Finally, the personal character of Cyrus had much to do with the revolution which subverted Media and gave to his own country the leadership of Western Asia. Fresh from his native hills, he saw in the court of the great king every thing to be detested, nothing to be admired. There national immorality

and national impiety flourished. There discipline was relaxed. There effeminacy was enthroned. There, for thirty-five years, the heroic virtues of war had given place to indolence, to indulgence, to inglorious riotings with piping eunuchs and unchaste dancing-girls. In all this there was the incentive to ambition and genius to strike a blow against one who was too great not to be envied and too mean not to be despised. The blow was struck with a manly arm, and the fabric of Median renown reared by the valor of Cyaxares passed away like a vision.



THE YOUNG CYRUS ENTERING ECBATANA.





## Book Fifth.

# BABYLONIA.

## CHAPTER XIX.—THE COUNTRY.



**F** the general character of the low-lying plain at the head of the Persian Gulf much has already been said in the history of Chaldaea. It is only necessary to recapitulate the leading features of that peculiar district. It consisted of two parts: that between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, and the long and irregular strip of country bordering the latter river on the right bank, and bounded westward by the Arabian desert.

The area of the first division, or LOWER MESOPOTAMIA, was nearly eighteen thousand square miles, and of the western tract about nine thousand square miles—making the entire area of what may be called Babylonia Proper not far from twenty-seven thousand square miles. The whole region was an alluvial deposit, the product of the two great rivers of Western Asia. The boundary on the east was the Tigris; on the south, the Gulf of Persia; on the west, the desert; and on the north, a line drawn from Samarah on the Tigris to Hit on the Euphrates. Comparatively, the district thus

defined was less than the kingdom of Portugal.

BABYLONIA PROPER, however, was only the nucleus of the vast Babylonian Empire, whose greatness is now to be considered. It will be remembered that Nabopolassar, on his defection from Saracus, the last king of Assyria, received from his ally, Cyaxares, the viceroyalty of Babylon. This he organized into an independent kingdom—the first step in a career of conquest which laid the larger part of Western Asia tributary at the feet of his successors. It is with the extensive countries thus brought under the sway of Babylon that we have now to deal.

At the downfall of Nineveh, and in the division of spoils between Cyaxares and Nabopolassar, it is not easy to determine precisely what countries fell to the share of the latter. A few historical references and the nature of the countries subdued by the combined arms of Media and Babylonia are the only indications of the limits of the parts claimed by the respective conquerors. In a general way it may be said that the western and south-western parts of the Assyrian Empire fell to Nabopolassar, and the residue to Cyaxares. Besides

this natural division, the Babylonian prince claimed and obtained the important country of Susiana, beyond the Tigris. This province constituted, then, the easternmost part of the kingdom of Babylon, and is first to be considered in describing the character of the countries dominated by Nabopolassar and his successors.

SUSIANA, corresponding with the modern provinces of Khuzistan and Luristan, lay between the river Tigris and the Bakhtiyari Mountains. The breadth of the country is one hundred and twenty miles. The surface is, for the most part, an alluvium, rising on the east into a hill country abutting against the mountains. The upland part is a beautiful region, covered with fine woods and full of springs. Across the country from the mountain spurs and running to the westward are many rivers of excellent character, clear and rapid. The country in the western part and in the valleys of Luristan is fertile in an eminent degree; but as the hills rise higher and higher on the east the land becomes bare and rocky, comparatively unfit for the abode of either man or beast. This mountainous barrier, however, constituted an excellent eastern boundary for the Empire—easily defensible against the encroachments of enemies. Looking down from this rocky rampart a country lay spread to the westward whose sloping hills and narrow valleys and swift streams of shining water framed a landscape similar to those presented on the Median slopes of the Zagros. Taken all in all, the province of Susiana was one of the most attractive and valuable districts which Nabopolassar inherited from Assyria.

Next in importance among the Babylonian provinces may be mentioned the VALLEY OF THE EUPHRATES, above the city of Hit. This was a long, serpentine piece of territory conforming to the course of the river. On the west it was bounded by the Arabian Desert, and on the east by the highlands of Mesopotamia. Through this tract the Euphrates makes its way, sunk in many parts in a deep bed and pressed between banks of limestone and gypsum. At intervals on either hand the hills rise to a moderate height and are covered with

shrubs and stunted timber. In other parts the course of the river is marked by a narrow strip of date-palms, willows, and tulips. So deep is the bed of the stream and so imperious the banks that the presence of the fresh-water tide is felt for but a short distance, and by the same circumstances irrigation is rendered difficult or impossible. The chief value of the valley is as a line of communication between Babylonia and the West. By this route Abraham and his household journeyed from Ur to Canaan, and ever afterwards the invasions and counter-invasions between Syria and Egypt, on the one hand, and the Empires founded on the Euphrates and Tigris on the other, were made through this natural gateway.

The chief fertility of this valley is found on the western or Mesopotamian side. Here, at intervals, especially in the upper course of the river, the cultivable land spreads out to a considerable distance, and is sufficiently fruitful to yield fair rewards to husbandry. The forests, too, improve north of the Khabour, and the general features of the country are such as please the eye and suggest civilization. In the times of Assyrian and Babylonian greatness this region along the Euphrates was filled with a large and active population. The river was one of the great lines of commerce, not only between the upper country and Babylon, but also in a larger sense between the East and the West.

The third province of the Empire was Mesopotamia Proper. Something has already been said of this region in the description of Assyria. The name indicates the boundaries. It is likely, however, that that portion of Mesopotamia in which the streams take their course to the Tigris rather than to the Euphrates, was not included in the part allotted to Nabopolassar in the division of Assyria. Doubtless, the valley of the Tigris was taken, along with the trans-Tigrene provinces, by Cyaxares as his portion of the conquest. But all that large region in which the waters of the rivers—notably the Khabour—fall off to the west and join the Euphrates, went naturally and politically to Nabopolassar and his successors.



This Euphratine slope of Mesopotamia is a country of much importance. It extended on the north to the Masian mountains; on the east to the watershed of the Tigris valley; on the west, to the Euphrates. In this district are the great rivers, the Bilik and the Khabour, with their numerous tributaries. The banks of these streams are generally rich in pasturage, and in parts the fertility is exceptionally good. Between the two rivers just mentioned, and in the district where rise the Hills of Abd-el-Aziz, is found a region known as the Land of Fountains, where more than three hundred springs of pure water break out into brooks and running streams, refreshing the land with a natural irrigation.

West of the river Euphrates, and south of the Taurus range, lay the country known as NORTHERN SYRIA. It was a land of small fertility and but few natural advantages. Like the Euphrates valley, its usefulness consisted largely in the fact of its being a thoroughfare between the East and the West. The surface was hilly and barren. From the north, beginning with the spurs of the Amanus and Taurus, the rocky ranges gradually descended to the desert country about Aleppo. The soil is generally unfruitful and the landscape desolate. The rainfall is insufficient, and the streams few and poor in water. The hillsides and plains are covered in many parts with stones, and but little cultivable land is found. A meager crop of grain may be produced in the better districts, but, for the rest, the country has no agricultural value beyond the production of pistachio-nuts and a few olives and grapes. It was, however, across this somewhat forbidding region that the vast and profitable trade between the countries of the Euphrates and the opulent cities of the distant Mediterranean was carried on. To this source must be attributed the greater part of whatever wealth and importance the region possessed in the times of the Empire.

As compared with the country just described, Syria Proper, lying to the south and west, had many and great advantages. This important province of the Babylonian Empire extended on the west to the Mediterranean, and on the south as far as the latitude of

Tyre. Along that distant coast arise the two mountain chains of Libanus and Bargylus, forming the barrier of the desert and furnishing hundreds of streams of water. Upon the slopes grew the finest timber. In the valleys between the spurs bounding rivulets swelled into rivers, and picturesque landscapes were seen. Further inland lies the parallel range of Antilibanus, with Hermon on the southern and Jebel-el-Ala at the northern terminus; but in natural attractiveness these mountain districts fall below the magnificent Libanus, with his cascades and forests and glens.

Between these two mountain ranges, extending north and south for over two hundred miles, is the famous valley known as the Hol-low Syria. Few richer districts are found anywhere on the earth's surface. About midway of this valley the two rivers, Orontes and Litany, one flowing northward and the other southward, take their rise. Along their banks is found a soil unsurpassed in fertility and resources. Stretching away to the foothills of the mountains is spread an area of vegetation the most luxuriant to be seen in all Western Asia.

But not only in its natural advantages is this noble valley preëminent. Its historical importance is even greater than the riches which nature has lavished upon it. For Hol-low Syria is the gateway between Asia and Africa. Along this lowland, flanked on either hand with mountains, the tides of human ambition have surged to and fro for several thousand years. Along this line the Egyptians carried their solemn banners in the days of Tothmes and Ramses II. By the same route, in an opposite direction, came the conquering armies of Sargon and Sennacherib. By this way marched and countermarched the forces of Necho and Nebuchadnezzar. Alexander, on his way to Amun to be proclaimed the Son of Jupiter, traversed this valley. Here, too, marched the victorious legions of Pompey the Great; and here the Crusaders swept up and down in their struggles to gain the Holy Sepulcher. Almost every foot of this verdant region has been covered with the tents of conquest and ground beneath the heel of war.

The western slope of Libanus, dropping down to the Mediterranean, extending along the coast for about one hundred and eighty miles, constituted PHŒNICIA, one of the smallest, but at the same time most important, countries included in the Babylonian Empire. Next the sea the land had no great fertility, being a mere strip of sand; but here was the possibility of commerce. Here, too, rose the long line of date-palms, which gave the name of *Phœnicia*—land of the purple date.

to the industry of men at a time when Egypt was still fresh in her youth. All this would have passed perhaps but for the safe and frequent harbors which indented the shore, holding at perpetual bay the storms of the boisterous sea. These quiet havens of Phœnicia were the birthplace of the navies of the world. Here man first learned to contend successfully with the perils of the open ocean and to make Neptune, as well as Mars and Jove, his confederate and friend.



PHŒNICIAN FLEET ON A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.

Drawn by P. Philippoteaux.

In its widest part the country was scarcely twenty miles in breadth, and anon the mountain spurs came within a mile of the sea. An insignificant belt of sand! But Nature had chosen it as the spot from which should begin the dominion of man over the deeps. Commerce was a necessity of the situation. The forests of Lebanon have been proverbial in all ages. The heavy cedars almost overhung the sea. To cut these giants of the wood and float them down the short swift streams to the coast gave a vent to the energies and profit

The fleets of Phœnicia put boldly to sea. When History was still in the dawn the strange crafts of this hardy maritime people were seen creeping around the shores of the Mediterranean. In the great days of Assyria and Babylon the overland trade from the valley of the Euphrates and still further east was brought to the Phœnician coast to be carried to the distant colonies and growing nations of the West. By and by these same fleets became important in discovery and in war. The cities of Phœnicia grew rich. They



were the arbiters of the deep. Government flourished. The court was one of the most splendid in the East. Tyre and Sidon became first known and then famous as far as the knowledge of man extended by communication in the earth; inso-much that the insignificant strip of territory in which they were situated possessed a greater importance in the destinies of the ancient world than did whole kingdoms which were given up to torpor and inaction.

Next in interest and influence among the outlying provinces of Babylonia was DAMASCUS. This country lay east of the range of Antilibanus, and owed its fertility, and in some sense its existence, to the two rivers Awaaj and Barada, by which it was chiefly watered. The moisture thus diffused in an otherwise arid region produces exuberant vegetation and a stalwart forest growth of poplar, cypress, and walnut. Wheat and barley grow in the fields; apricots, oranges, pomegranates, and olives, in the orchards. In this fruitful circle of more than thirty miles in extent lies the city of Damascus, which for beauty of situation and construction has been for centuries the most attractive of oriental cities.

In its full extent PALESTINE, the Holy Land of the Hebrews, embraced an area of about eleven thousand square miles. This limit included the subordinate divisions of Galilee, Samaria, Bashan, and Gilead. The full length

of the country was one hundred and forty miles, the breadth varying from seventy to one hundred miles. The fundamental fact of Palestine was the Jordan, which traverses a



PHENICIAN SCENE AT COURT.

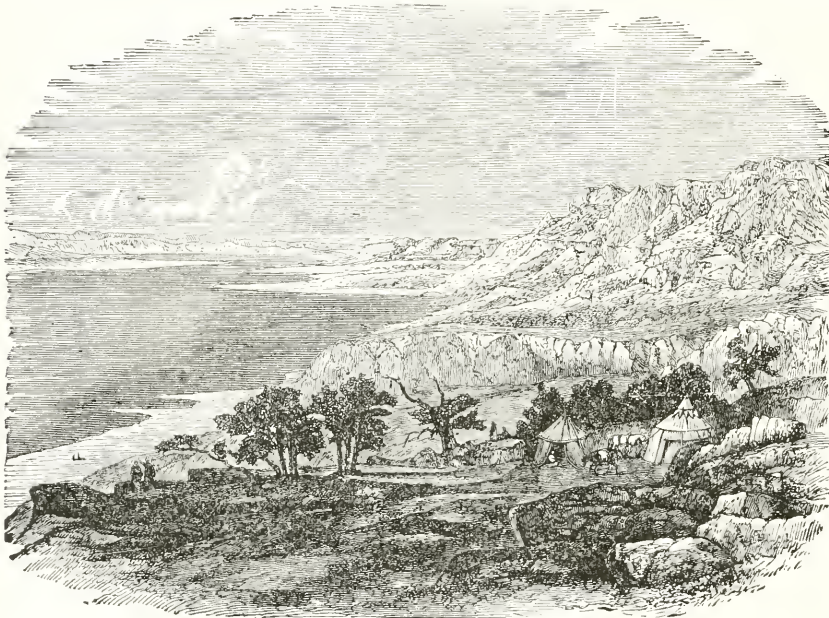
Drawn by P. Philippoteaux.

rocky valley from the slopes of Mount Hermon, in latitude  $33^{\circ} 25'$  to latitude  $31^{\circ} 47' N.$ , where it loses its existence in the brackish waters of the Dead Sea.

The region is peculiar. The valley is clearly



the result of some cataclysm or volcanic eruption, by which the surface of the earth has been rent, producing a wide gorge or fissure, the lower or southern portion of which is greatly depressed below the surface. The Jordan begins his course at a considerable elevation above the sea, and pursues a somewhat precipitous course to the latitude of Merom, where the sea-level is attained. From this point onwards the Jordan is lower than the Mediterranean, and as the descent is rapid, the level of the river at the salt lake which engulfs it is one thousand three hundred and twenty feet below that of the sea.



THE DEAD SEA, LOOKING SOUTH.

On the two sides of the Jordan the land rises in rocky ridges. The country is thus divided into two slopes set over the one against the other. In width the fertile part of the valley is from one to ten miles, and this narrow tract embraces about all the fertile land which Palestine possesses. A few vales here and there, generally running at right-angles to the course of the river, have a deposit of rich soil, from which spring beauty and fragrance, but the general aspect of the country is forbidding and gloomy.

On the highlands rising from the right or west bank of the Jordan are found the small states of Judæa, Galilee, and Samaria, while

on the corresponding slope to the left lie the provinces of Ituræa, Bashan, and Gilead. The whole land is hilly, undulating, rising into a mountainous background. The southern portion is most arid and barren, cheerless and uninviting. The northern part has a larger number of running streams. In some districts of Samaria there are plains and valleys which invite cultivation and yield fair rewards to toil. The most beautiful part is Galilee, in which water-brooks, sloping hills, and green forests send back to the eye a sense of rest and quiet. Of the level portions of Palestine the fairest to view is the plain of Esdraëlon,

stretching from the bay of Acre to the valley of the Jordan and presenting many flowery landscapes.

The last of the subordinate divisions of this small but famous country is Philistia—from which by a corruption of the spelling the name of *Palestine* is derived. The district lies to the right towards Egypt, and in its general aspect is

like the other provinces, though on a lower level. Towards the sea Philistia sinks into a sandy plain, but the inland parts are more attractive and contain a good deal of cultivable land, yielding wheat and barley in abundance. In this region are the cities of Gaza, Jaffa, and Ashdod, famous alike in myth and history: in myth, for their names are lost in the shadows of remote ages; in history, for it was through Philistia that the banners of conquest were borne back and forth in the great wars between Egypt and the powers of Western Asia.

Next after Palestine, among the countries which Nabopolassar obtained by the conquest



of Nineveh, may be mentioned the large and irregular region called *IDUMÆA*, lying next to Egypt. It was the land of the Amalekites, the terror of Jewry. On the east lay the great desert; on the south, the mountains of Sinai and the northern arm of the Red Sea; on the west, the borders of Egypt; on the north Palestine. The whole region was—and is—an undulating rocky plain, with a surface of thin soil or gravel, degenerating into a semi-desert. In some parts there are shrubs and pasturage, whereon the nomads of Arabia, beating up from the south, sustain their flocks for a season. An occasional grove of palms relieves the monotony of the landscape, yields its fruit to the hungry desertman, furnishes him a shade for his noonday rest. Next to the seashore the country is as an elevated beach. Further inland, extending from the fissure in which the Dead Sea lies, is the long depression called the Araba Valley, running down towards Egypt, and gradually rising to the level of the plain. Still further there are a few barren ranges of un aspiring hills, from the summit of which the African sunset is seen full and red beyond the sea of Egypt. The area of ancient Idumæa may be stated approximately at one thousand six hundred square miles.

The last of the Babylonian provinces here requiring mention was *PALMYRA*—the Land and City of Palms. It lay between the valley of the Euphrates and Syria, with the desert of Arabia on the south. The general character of the country was similar to that of Idumæa and the region about Damascus. But here the desert is broken at intervals by an oasis—that happy local paradise of the burning sand. The city of Palmyra itself was built in one of these oases, among nodding palms, amid fountains and brooks of life-giving water.

Such, then, is the general outline of the vast dominions ruled by Nebuchadnezzar. From the extreme east, on the further borders of Luristan, to the western limit, at the gateway of Egypt, the Empire measured well-nigh one thousand four hundred miles in extent. The breadth ranged in different parts from one hundred and sixty to two hundred and eighty miles, giving an aggregate area of nearly

two hundred and fifty thousand square miles of territory—an area about equivalent to the empire of Austria. In shape, it will be observed, the Babylonian dominions were greatly elongated from east to west, and this fact became one of the chief obstacles in the administration and maintenance of authority. The difficulty was heightened, moreover, by the displacement of Babylon, the capital, which occupied a position almost at one extremity of the country, being nearly a thousand miles distant from the western frontier. All the advantages which the great city enjoyed, all the ancient fame which gathered about that marvelous capital, could hardly counter-balance the evils arising from its extreme situation.

If beginning on the east, we glance at the rivers by which the Babylonian Empire was watered, we find first of all the *OROATIS*, the modern *Tab*, on the borders of Susiana. Its headwaters are gathered within the limits of Persia; but in its principal course it traversed the territory of the great king. The whole length of the stream is over two hundred miles, and for a considerable distance above the mouth it is navigable for boats of respectable size. In its upper course the waters are fresh and pure, but near the sea the influence of the tides and brackish sands convert the current into brine.

A second important river of Susiana is the *JERAHL*. This stream gathers its waters from many fountains on the western slopes of the Zagros. After accumulating a considerable volume, the river receives the large tributary known as the *Abi Zard*, or *Yellow River*, and pursues his southwesterly course towards the Persian Gulf. Near *Dorak* the *Jerahi* enters the district where irrigation is necessary, and from this point onward the volume of water in the channel is greatly reduced by canals and reservoirs, into which it was distributed. Though thus diminished, the stream maintains its course to the Gulf, which it enters after a winding route of two hundred miles. This river, after its junction with the *Abi Zard*, is navigable for boats of considerable burden, its breadth being over a hundred yards.

Much larger than either of the streams just described is the KURAN. Like the preceding, it is made up of two branches, the Kuran proper and the DIZFUL. The former stream takes its rise in the Yellow Mountains, bordering Persia, and after a tortuous course breaks through the Zagros and turns in a south-westerly course to Shuster. Here the stream divides into two channels, to be reunited just above the junction with the Dizful. From its fountains to this junction the Kuran is two hundred and ten miles in length, and the Dizful, before the waters of the two streams are joined, has flowed a distance of two hundred and eighty miles. Below the confluence the Kuran is a majestic river, equaling or surpassing in volume either the Tigris or the Euphrates. The mouth of this great stream is in the Shat-el-Arab, about twenty miles below the city of Busra. The whole length of the Kuran is about four hundred and thirty miles.

A longer but less important river belonging to the same region is the KERKAH—the Cloaspes of the ancients. Its volume is made up from three principal tributaries, all of which flow down from the slopes of the Zagros. After the union of the three branches the river takes a westerly course, passing the city of Behistun and the ruins of Rudbar. At the last-named place the channel finds its way out of the mountainous district, and after its confluence with the Abi-Zal flows into the plain. With its left margin it washes the ruins of Susa, and thence turning to the south-west falls, after a course of more than five hundred miles, into the Shat-el-Arab. Like the preceding streams the Kerkah is navigable for large-sized boats.

Of the two great rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris, without which Chaldaea, Assyria, Babylonia had never been, a full description has already been given in Books Second and Third. In like manner the course and character of most of the Mesopotamian streams have been sufficiently delineated. If we pass beyond the Euphrates to the west, however, we shall find a great number of important streams not hitherto described or noticed. Beginning at the north, the first of these is

the SAJUR, a tributary of the Euphrates. It is a stream about sixty-five miles in length, navigable in its lower course for boats of the smaller sort. The waters are gathered from the spurs and foot-hills of the Amanus range and are borne along by the ruin-crowned hill, Tel Khalid, to join the parent river in latitude  $36^{\circ} 37' N.$

The second river of this region is the KOWCIK, called by the Greeks the Chalis. Its sources are in the hills of Ain-Tab, and its channel is first directed towards the Euphrates. Nature, however, has put barriers in this direction. In the plain near Aleppo a large tributary from the north deflects the course of the stream to the south, and so, for sixty miles, the river flows on through the sandy plain. At this point in its route it meets the hills and is turned eastward for a short distance, where it enters and is lost in the great brackish marsh called El Melak.

In that remarkable valley between the ranges of Libanus and Antilibanus rises the ORONTES, the finest river of Syria. The waters of this great stream are gathered from the slopes of the Antilibanus. Its upper fountain is seven miles north of the ruins of Baalbek. The course of the river is first in a north-westerly direction, but after a sudden turn to the north-east the stream flows along the foot-hills of the Antilibanus to Lebweh, where it is deflected over to the plains of Lebanon. From this quarter the volume of water is increased by many tributaries, and the river finds its way along the base of the Lebanon range. Further on it flows through the Lake of Hems, and issuing, makes a detour around the extreme of the mountains, turning towards the Mediterranean. In this part it traverses the valley of Antioch, and finally reaches the sea in latitude  $36^{\circ} 5' N.$  The whole length of the river is a little over two hundred miles. Its course is rapid and impetuous; its channel deep and capacious.

The river LITANY has already been mentioned as occupying the same valley with the Orontes; but the two streams flow in opposite directions. The Orontes is known as the River of Syria; the Litany, as the River of Tyre. The fountains of the latter are near to those



of the former. A few miles north of Baalbek a slight watershed turns the brooks to the south and the valley gathers them together into the Litany. The course of the stream is at first southerly. The mountain slopes on either hand send down additional rivulets, and the volume is widened and deepened. Near the southern extreme the valley between the Libanus and Antilibanus is contracted in a narrow and forbidding gorge a thousand feet in depth, through which the river rushes headlong. After foaming and plunging through these narrows, the agitated stream issues into the plain, circles around the base of Lebanon, and, after a course of seventy-five miles, finds its way to the sea.

On the opposite side of the Antilibanus range rises the River of Damascus, called the BARADA. It has its principal source in a small lake situated in latitude  $33^{\circ} 41' N.$  From this origin the stream flows eastward, first through a glen between high cliffs until the Antilibanus is cleared, and then from the town of Suk in a south-easterly course towards Damascus. In this vicinity the river begins to be divided, both by artificial and natural channels, until its waters are mostly dispersed to convert a desert region into a paradise. What remains of the stream finally disappears, after a course of about forty miles, in some marsh lands a half day's journey from the city.

The river JORDAN is immemorially famous. Its sources are to the north of Lake Merom. Its uppermost fountain is a spring called the Ras-en-Neba, near Hasbeiya. The rivulet, proceeding from this origin, descends the north-western slope of Mount Hermon. Small brooks from several directions join their waters at Merom. This upper part of the Jordan valley is a place of reeds and marshes, and even after issuing from the lake the Jordan is for a considerable distance a sluggish and indifferent stream. Then, as the valley sinks, the current becomes rapid and in some parts headlong. Between Merom and Tiberias the fall is in places as much as fifty feet to the mile, but after passing the latter place the decline is not so rapid, and the stream sometimes flows with a placid current. From

Tiberias to the Dead Sea is a distance of seventy miles, and the difference in level is about six hundred feet.

In this part of its course the Jordan receives two tributaries. The first of these is the JARMUK, which drains the district south-east of Lake Tiberias. In the rainy season its banks are full, but in summer the channel is almost dry. It traverses a country of considerable fertility until it approaches the rocky gorge of the Jordan, into which it falls through a chasm with precipitous walls on either hand a hundred feet in height. The other confluent of the parent stream is the brook JABBOK. This classic stream drains the land of Gilead. Like the Jarmuk, the Jabbok swells to a torrent in winter and shrinks into a rocky bed in summer. On the sides of the ravine through which it flows—sunk deep in the earth—are seen overhanging oaks. Here is a thicket of cane and yonder a cluster of oleanders. Like the preceding stream the Jabbok enters the Jordan through a cleft in the rocks, roaring when swollen, and broken into foam. The whole length of the Jordan, from the springs of Ras-en-Neba to the Dead Sea, is, in a direct line, one hundred and thirty miles, or twice that distance if the wanderings of the channel be included in the measurement.

Passing, then, to other bodies of water embraced within the limits of the Babylonian Empire, we find not a few lakes of importance. Especially is this true in the western portions of the dominions of Nebuchadnezzar. The greater number of these sheets of water were of the brine briny, made so by having no outlets and by the saline character of the surrounding districts. Four of the most important, however, were fresh water; namely, the Lake of Antioch—the Bahr-el-Melak—the Bahr-el-Kades, the Lake Merom, and the Sea of Tiberias. All of these bodies were simply expansions in the beds of rivers, by whose volume they were perpetually replenished from the hills, and through whose channels the overflow was carried to the sea.

Beginning in Northern Syria, the first salt lake demanding attention was the SABAKHAN. It was situated on the route from Aleppo to the Euphrates, just below the thirty-sixth

parallel of latitude. It contains about fifty square miles of water, being thirteen miles in length and from three to five miles broad. It is the product of several small streams, which pour their contributions into a basin from which there is no outlet. The waters are so exceedingly salty that the natural incrustations are gathered along the shores and sold—a rudimentary and puny commerce.

The *BAHR-EL-MELAK* has already been mentioned as the lake into which flows the river of Aleppo. It has the same general character as that last described, but is considerably less in area. Its value, however, is not less considerable, for from the bed of this basin, when the waters under the summer sun have receded to their lowest ebb, the inhabitants take from the bottom a large part of the salt which supplies the markets of Syria. Over the surface of the same sheet of brine, when the winter rains have filled the basin to the brim, large flocks of geese and ducks and solitary flamingoes go sailing.

The three lakes in the immediate vicinity of Damascus have already received some notice. Between the rainy and the dry season they fluctuate greatly in extent. Indeed, when the rains are excessive the edges of the three bodies touch each other, and the lake is continuous. They are all, as has been said, supplied from the streams of the Antilibanus, and being without an outlet, are brackish and heavy.<sup>1</sup>

The *DEAD SEA*, at the lower extremity of the gorge of the Jordan, is the largest salt lake of Western Asia. Perhaps no other body of water of equal size has attracted so much attention. It is forty-six miles in length and ten and a-half miles in breadth. The area is about two hundred and fifty square miles. The lake is of an oblong form, being quite regular in shape, except on the eastern side near the southern extremity, where a long peninsula projects nearly to the outer shore. All that portion of the sea lying

south of this peninsula is shallow, having a depth of only a few feet, while the main body lying to the north sinks to the extraordinary depth of one thousand two hundred or one thousand three hundred feet; and since the surface of the lake is above one thousand three hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, the *bottom* of the chasm is in some places more than two thousand six hundred feet below the sea! No other body of water on the earth's surface is so greatly depressed.

The water of the Dead Sea is impregnated with salt and other minerals to a degree unequalled. Lake Urumiyeh, in Northern Media, most nearly approaches it in saltiness and general character. From this unusual impregnation of minerals, and from the great depression of the surface, the Dead Sea waters have a specific gravity and consequent buoyancy greater than any other lake or sea. Chemical analysis shows that one-fourth of the whole weight of this thick brine is composed of solid matter—a quantity twice as great as is found in the waters of the open ocean. Heavy logs of wood thrown into the Dead Sea float out of the surface, buoyed up like cork, and the human body will sink of its own weight only to the shoulders. For the greater part the lake is lifeless. Even the shores are incrustated with the crystalline deposits of ages. Lot's wife is a pillar of salt!

Turning to the fresh-water lakes, the most important is the *SEA OF TIBERIAS*, or Galilee. In shape it resembles its salt counterpart of the south, being an ellipse, with its greater axis up and down the Jordan valley. Its length is thirteen miles; its width, six miles. The greatest depth is one hundred and sixty-five feet. It is simply an expansion of the Jordan, which comes down from Merom discolored with a muddy sediment. This, however, is left in the bottom of the lake, and the river issues below a clear and beautiful stream.

The region of Tiberias and the sheet of water itself may claim considerable beauty—more than any other region of Palestine. The traveler stands on the beach and sees around a large circumference of the lake a well-defined, pebbly shore; before him a lake of bright,

<sup>1</sup>The marvel of the Dead Sea in regard to the quality of its waters has been greatly exaggerated. The fact is, that dead seas prevail wherever the natural conditions are present. Syria abounds in them, and Utah furnishes a notable example.



pure water; around him a background of hills. Water-fowl on graceful wing alight here and there, and the finny tribes break the surface in their sport.

A few miles north of Tiberias is Lake Merom, now known as the *BAHR-EL-HULEH*. It is nearly circular in shape, and has an area of about twenty-five square miles. The country round about is a marsh, covered with swamp-grass, reeds, and rushes. Through these the traveler beats a difficult passage down to the lake. Wild fowl take to flight, and the water teems with fishes.

Passing from the country of the Jordan and entering the valley of the Orontes, we find the *BAHR-EL-KADES*, similar in all respects to the lakes Tiberias and Merom. The first is, like the latter two, an expansion of the river to which it owes its supply. The area of the Kades lake is nearly the same as that of Merom, being about eight miles long by three in width. There is a tradition extant that the lake in question owes its origin to a dam which was built across the Orontes in the times of Alexander the Great, and there are some evidences that the basin has been artificially formed by the deflection of the river. If such is, indeed, the origin of *Bahr-el-Kades*, the lake had no existence in the times of Nebuchadnezzar—a thing quite possible.

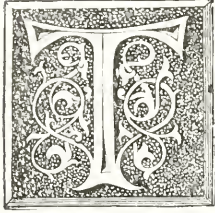
About one hundred and fifteen miles north of the last mentioned body of water lies the Sea of Antioch, the *BAHR-EL-MELAK* of modern geography. It lies nearly four-square, with the angles, like the corners of an Assyrian palace, facing the points of the compass. It is a shallow lagoon, only a few feet in depth. The surrounding country is a marsh, like the region about Merom. The banks are fringed around the whole circumference with a thick growth of reeds, and the huts of fishermen are seen here and there—as they have been from immemorial times.

Such were the general features of the great

Empire of the Babylonians. To the east lay Persia, between which and the Chaldean plains rose an almost impassable barrier of mountains. After the conquest of Assyria by Media, the latter country bounded Babylonia on the north, nor was there any physical obstacle to invasion from that direction. It will be remembered, however, that from the circumstances attending the overthrow of Nineveh, relations of amity were established between the Medes and the Babylonians, and were long maintained. The danger, therefore, to which the kings of Babylon might have been exposed from possible attack by their ambitious and warlike neighbors on the north was from the first reduced to a minimum.

On the south of Babylonia lay *ARABIA*—a desert waste. Such was the country that no great population could be maintained upon its treeless, blasted surface. For this reason the Empire had little to fear from the Arabs, who could never muster in sufficient numbers to menace a compact and powerful people like the Babylonians. On the extreme west of the dominions of the great king spread the *MEDITERRANEAN*, from whose billows no threatening foe was to be expected. On the south-west border, however, lay the land of the Pharaohs, the most ancient and for a long time the most powerful of kingdoms. Egypt was the rival of Babylonia. The monarchs of the two great nations eyed each other askance; and causes of quarrel were found not a few. The remoteness of the two countries was the saving fact which prevented almost continual war. If Egypt had the greater fertility, it was restricted to narrow boundaries. The wider domains and larger and more warlike population gave the advantage to the Babylonians, who waxed great and branched like a cedar, while the declining energies of the Egyptians wasted to feebleness and extinction. It is now proper to consider in brief the peculiarities of the Babylonian climate and products.

## CHAPTER XX.—CLIMATE AND PRODUCTS.



**T**AKEN all in all, the countries included within the Babylonian Empire were dry and hot. On the south the desert was in close proximity. The seas which washed the borders of the dominions of Nebuchadnezzar were small, and their influence was little felt at a distance from the shore. Nor did the mountain ranges included within the Empire reach to such length and rise to such height as to insure large quantities of rain or diffuse everlasting freshness. The country was included between the thirtieth and thirty-seventh parallels of latitude, and was through the larger part of its extent level and sandy.

From all of these circumstances heat predominated. The summers were long and scorching; the winters, brief and mild. Of course, the high temperatures of Chaldea, of Idumæa and Palmyrene were more excessive in degree than in Mesopotamia and the northern provinces. In all those parts approximate to the Persian Gulf, even in the hilly regions of Susiana, the heat of midsummer is fearful. Frequently the thermometer at midday reaches 107° of Fahrenheit, and even in the underground apartments, which the people construct to protect themselves, the temperature hardly falls below 100°. At night the heat is assuaged, and the people find rest on the roofs of their houses. In all the low countries and southern districts winter brings no snow. In December the rainy season sets in, and continues until March. Sometimes the clouds pour down abundantly, and at intervals there are violent storms of hail. Such is the general character of the eastern parts of what was the Babylonian Empire.

In the western provinces, next to the Mediterranean, there was a moister and cooler climate. In the mountainous districts of Libanus and Antilibanus the winter is sufficiently rigorous. In the valleys, however, the climate

is more mild than in the corresponding districts of Europe. In some parts, indeed, as in Palestine and along the Phœnician coast, the winters are scarcely more severe than in Babylonia proper. At the Dead Sea the thermometer never falls to the freezing point of water, and in the summer season the heats are intense and oppressive. In general the temperature of Syria is about as here described, but in the higher regions the air has a freer movement, and the effects of the heat are thereby assuaged.

The one great climatic drawback, however, in the countries once ruled by the kings of Babylon is the fierce *Sirocco*, or hot wind of the desert. This burning blast is always blown from the heated sands of Arabia. It is the terror alike of man and beast. Mixed with a cloud of fine hot sand the blast sweeps up over the Syrian or Babylonian plains and blisters what living thing soever it smites. The sky grows lurid and the air is darkened. The animals and birds fly to their covert, and man seeks a shelter for protection.

It is not likely that any great changes have occurred in the climatic conditions of the Babylonian dominions during the twenty-four hundred years that have elapsed since the days of the great Empire. Perhaps the soil in many parts has suffered some deterioration, but the same products are undoubtedly yielded to-day as when they were gathered by the husbandmen for Nebuchadnezzar's army. In one respect the country has suffered much. Many regions have been stripped of their forests, and by this fatal procedure the natural tendencies to drought have been aggravated. Especially is this true in Syria, the climate of which has certainly undergone some change from the denudation of the woodlands;<sup>1</sup> but

<sup>1</sup> Woe to the country that cuts down its woods. The United States may well be warned by the past. The woodman's axe is indeed the signal of civilization, and it is also the forerunner of the desert! The desert lies just the other side of the cleared fields.



the essential identity of products ancient and modern precludes the conclusion of any great transformation.

In ancient Babylonia wheat grew native, as did also barley. Lentils and sesame came without culture, but more abundantly with it. The edible roots peculiar to most parts of the north temperate zone grew plentifully and yielded large crops to the gardener. The date palm flourished in all the southerly parts of the Empire, and the great apple-belt of the world crossed the Babylonian plain. The fruits of the country were various, and grew a plentiful supply without the perils of winter rigors or the untimely frosts of spring.

The yield of smaller grains was almost like that of Egypt in abundance. The character and amount of some of these crops as given by the ancient historians is well-nigh incredible, and can only be accepted on the supposition that the alluvium of the Euphrates valley was still fresh in its native powers, and that the indigenous wheat-plant and other similar growths felt here the rich impulses of nature.

The products of the Babylonian plain have already been sketched in the History of Chaldæa. Those of Susiana were similar. Wheat and barley yielded a hundred fold. The date-palm flourished. In the native woods grew acacias and poplars. This region, like parts of Media and Persia, is the home of apples and pears. Nearly all the fruits peculiar to the better parts of the north temperate zone grew ripe and abundant in the upland districts and foot-hills of Khuzistan. The mountain slopes of Susiana furnished a fair supply of timber, and this was sometimes cut, as in Phœnicia, and floated down the streams to the populous districts, where the cities were built. For building materials, however, the palm-tree—straight and tall and easily hewn—was generally preferred, and this tree grew best in the low plains next to the Gulf.

In the district hitherto described as the Valley of the Euphrates—meaning that part of the valley above the alluvial plain of Chaldæa—the products are not much varied from those of Susiana and Babylonia proper. As we ascend the river one of the peculiarities is the appearance of the olive instead of the

date: the latter prefers the sand. Next come the mulberry and the pistachio-nut, and the walnut is abundant. In this region, as well as in many parts of Mesopotamia, the vine flourishes, though the valleys of the great rivers seem not to have equaled those of Syria as it respects the vintage. The small grains—wheat, millet, and barley—grew well in all the arable districts bordering on the Upper Euphrates; and the orchards, in addition to apples and pears and plums, yielded good crops of pomegranates and oranges.

The northern portion of Syria was better adapted to pastoral pursuits than to agriculture. In general, there was more forest and less productive soil. It was from the dense woods of Northern Syria that the kings of Nineveh, in the days of her glory, brought the treasures of timber with which to adorn the palaces of their capital. In various parts of this region immense forests of walnut, oak, pine, poplar, and ash are found, furnishing an almost limitless amount of lumber. In the open country wild shrubs appear in abundance—the oleander with its splendid flowers, the honeysuckle with its fragrance, the myrtle with its deep green leaves. In the orchards grow the orange and the olive, the pomegranate and the mulberry. The vine also is cultivated, and pistachio-nuts and walnuts flourish as well as in Mesopotamia. The vegetable growths of the garden are similar to those of like latitudes in Europe. Of general products the castor-bean is—and has always been—one of the most important staples of Syria; and in modern, though perhaps not in ancient, times, cotton assumes its place among the products of the country.

Nearly all of the native and transplanted growths of Babylonia are found in South-western Syria. In this part of the dominions of the Empire, however, the heat was more intense than in the northern provinces, and the greater moisture from the proximity of the sea tended to create certain modifications in the products of the country. Here, also, are found the highest mountains within the limits of the ancient Empire, and these, also, were the causes of some changes in the things which spring from the soil. Many new products

appear, not found in Northern Syria, such as the fig and the banana. The date still grows as far towards Arabia as Damascus, but its existence is precarious. Some of the products, such as liquorice and the egg-plant, are suggestive of Egypt. Others, like the lemon and the almond, are similar to the same fruits in the southern latitudes of the United States.

The general character of the products of ancient Palestine are of common fame, and need hardly be repeated. The woods of the mountain slopes were of cedar and oak and juniper. The wild olive was a common plant of the valleys. The papyrus of Egypt, the sugarcane, and the mistletoe either grew wild or were cultivated in the gardens.—Such is a cursory view of the vegetable products, the fruits, and the forests which prevailed in the Empire of the Babylonians.

Of mineral resources the supply was peculiar. In Babylonia Proper one of the most important was bitumen. It was found as far east as Susiana, but the most abundant supply was procured from the springs of Hit, on the Euphrates. In the Dead Sea of Palestine the same substance exists in inexhaustible quantities. The part which this strange substance played in the rockless plain of ancient Chaldaea, and afterwards in the buildings of the Babylonians, has already been referred to in the Second Book. As has already been said, common salt was abundantly procured from the beds of many of the Syrian lakes, and was exported as merchandise. The Dead Sea and the lakes near Palmyra yielded the same mineral, the supply being limited only by the energy of the manufacturers. From the sources just mentioned, sulphur and niter were also procured, and in other parts the same substances were occasionally found. Of all the countries embraced within the Empire, the best for copper and iron was Palestine, but even in this country the yield of these valuable metals was not great. Silver was found in small quantities in the range of Antilibanus. It is not known that any gold mine existed within the countries swayed by the kings of Babylon.

Among the Babylonians gems and precious stones were greatly coveted. But it does not

appear that the same were found anywhere in the low plains around the head of the Persian Gulf. Several kinds of gems were taken from the hills of Susiana. In the channel of the river Choaspes, agates were found in abundance. In the vicinity of Damascus there were beds from which alabaster was taken. The Phœnician mines furnished lapis-lazuli, and amethysts were obtained in the neighborhood of Petra. From these various sources the rough gems were brought to Babylon, and engraved in a manner which has excited the envy of modern times. Cornelians, rock-crystals, chalcedony and onyx stones, jasper, and feldspar were sought and sold in the shops of the great city.

Of the supply of building material something has already been said in the history of Chaldaea and Assyria. No stone was found in Babylonia. In the earliest times, the acquaintance of the Chaldeans with the native tribes of Mesopotamia was not such as to encourage the importation of stone from the north. In the valley of the Euphrates, above the city of Hit, building stone is abundant. Quarries exist on both sides of the river, and in the country to the west, that is, in Northern Syria, there is no deficiency.

The hills of Susiana are also piled up with stone, and in Southern Syria ledges of outcropping rock frequently constitute the principal feature of the landscape. The variety most abundant is common limestone, though sandstone as well as silicious rocks and granite are plentifully distributed. In the later and more splendid days of the Babylonian Empire stone was much used for building and ornamentation, and the material so employed was taken from the quarries on the Upper Euphrates, and brought down the river to the capital. Building with bricks, however, was never superseded, even in the palmiest times of the great kings.

Passing, then, to the animal life of Babylonia, and beginning with the savage beasts, we find the lion, then, as always, a monarch. He was to be met in many parts—Chaldaea of old, Mesopotamia, Syria, alike in the desert and the hills. Next and most formidable were the bear, the hyena, the panther, and the



leopard. The herbivora were represented by the wild ox, the wild ass, the stag, the antelope, the goat, and the sheep. Of the lesser creatures may be named the fox, the hare, and the rabbit. A few of these animals are still found, but rarely or in remote districts; others are common, and abound. The ferocious beasts have receded or encroached upon the borders of civilization as those limits have been enlarged or contracted by the fluctuations of political power.

In modern times quite a number of additional animals not mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions have become prevalent in the countries once dominated by the Babylonians. Such are the otter and the beaver, the lynx and the badger, the sable and the squirrel, the jerboa and the porcupine. Some of these are found in some parts, and some in others. Alligators have been occasionally seen in the Euphrates by travelers.

The birds of Babylonia were—and are—nearly identical with those now occupying the same latitudes in Europe and America. The chief birds of prey are the eagle, the vulture, the falcon, the owl, the hawk, and the crow. The smaller race consists of magpies, jackdaws, blackbirds, thrushes, nightingales, larks, *et id omne genus*. Of the edible birds the most prized and most abundant are pheasants, quails, and partridges. Of the river-fowl the principal are geese and ducks. Of the ugly and fantastic species may be mentioned the pelican, the flamingo, the stork, the heron, and the cormorant. Besides these are snipes, woodcocks, sand-grouse, and parrots. In the times of the Empire the ostrich was common in Syria and Babylonia, though that phenomenal creature is not any longer found in those regions. Perhaps the most peculiar bird of these countries is a kind of heron, unknown in Europe. It inhabits Northern Syria and the districts about Aleppo. It is grayish white in color, having tips of scarlet on the wings, and a large beak scarlet and black. The feet are yellow and the eyes red. In shape it resembles the stork, but it is *four feet high*, and the expanded wings measure *as much as nine feet*! This strange creature goes in a flock of his kind. They are semi-aquatic.

In the rivers of Northern Syria they may be seen standing in rows across the stream. They select a shallow. Here they squat with their outspread tails up-stream. The current is thus stopped; the water below runs away, leaving bare the bed. When this feat is accomplished the birds all swoop down at a signal and gather up in their big beaks the fish and frogs that have been exposed in the bed of the river!

The fishes belonging to the waters of Assyria and Chaldæa have already been mentioned. Some of the reptiles also have been noticed. Of insects, those most dreaded are scorpions, tarantulas, and locusts. The last-named have been the dread of fifty generations. Coming up from no one knows where, swarming across the sky in clouds that no one can measure, settling like an inexorable plague on every green thing that springs from the goodness of the earth, these devastating creatures are the veritable curse of the countries subject to their ravages. In the locust-bird Nature has kindly provided an antidote with the bane.

The principal domestic animals of Babylonia may be briefly mentioned. The chief of these were the camel, the horse, and the ass. The nature of the country was specially adapted to the service of these creatures. The open plain, tending on the Arabian side to the desert, gave opportunity for the endurance and sagacity of the camel, for the fleetness and spirit of the horse, for the dogged patience and pertinacity of the ass. Next in importance were the mules and the oxen. The former were large and strong, and as in other countries combined in themselves the better qualities of their diverse ancestry. They were much used alike in peace and war. The monuments of Assyria show them under the saddle, harnessed to carts, drawing huge war-chariots on the way to battle. From their attitude in the inscriptions they seem to have been large and full of spirit, plunging and rearing like horses. The asses from which these animals were derived were larger and better in all respects than the breeds known in Europe. The same can not be said for the horses of Babylonia, for these were hardly

equal to those of some other countries. Nevertheless they were produced in great numbers. Herodotus narrates that the stables of one of the Babylonian kings contained no fewer than eight hundred stallions and sixteen thousand mares. The prevalent breeds, if we may judge by the delineations which have been left in Assyria, were large-boned, large-headed, strong, and heavy-muscled rather than elegant or swift—adapted rather for the brick-yards of the plain than for fleetness or beauty.

The sheep and goats of Mesopotamia were like those of other countries. Of the former animal several breeds were reared, of varying grades as it related to flesh or fleece. The latter yielded its flesh to the Babylonian butcher-stalls—its milk and cheese to the peasant. Next in importance of the domestic animals was the dog. The tablets show them of many species and in the performance of various services. The breeds presented ranged from the elegant greyhound to the heavy and impassive mastiff.

It is not known that the camel was native to Babylonia. In several of the neighboring countries, however, the beast was an efficient agent in the affairs of life, and his importation into the Babylonian provinces was easy and natural. The caravan trade then—as

ever—depended for its efficiency upon the ship of the desert. The commercial communication between the countries bordering on the valley of the Euphrates and those lying along the Mediterranean was maintained, perhaps originally suggested, by the abilities and temper of the camel. In war likewise and in common travel this same remarkable creature became indispensable to the wants and caprices of men.

On the Babylonian cylinders are found certain representations which seem to indicate the buffalo as an animal native to the country. The creature thus delineated differs from the ox, and corresponds very well with the buffalo of Europe. The animal appears to have been domesticated, and to have been subsisted in the same manner and for the same ends as the ordinary Babylonian cattle. Oxen are represented on the same tablets, and the uses of the two species, whether of labor in the fields, or slaughter for the markets, or of sacrifice to the gods, seem to have been identical.

Such is a brief sketch—as supplemented by what is said in the histories of Chaldaea and Assyria—of the general aspects of Nature as she appeared to the ancient Babylonians, and of the principal gifts which she gave them out of her treasure.

## CHAPTER XXI.—PEOPLE AND CITIES.



IT is difficult to define properly the race-character of the Babylonians. From the earliest times the people inhabiting the low plains of Chaldaea were a *mélange* of diverse tribes. Here the old Cushites had had their abode. Here certain of the Semitic family had found a home. Here perhaps some of the primitive Aryans had intruded among their elder brethren. Here the great Arab Dynasty had been established, and had ruled from the middle of the sixteenth century

to the year B. C. 1300. At the latter date the Semitic Assyrians of the north swooped down on Babylon, and took the land, bringing in the customs and blood of Upper Mesopotamia. Here the plan of colonizing the conquered but insurrectionary populations of foreign countries was fully and unreservedly adopted; and here the tides of war, sweeping back and forth from the east and the north and the west, drew in with their ebb and flow a vast *débris* of humanity, and left it as a sediment in the countries about Babylon. From all these causes a mixture and agglomeration of races took place within the realms



of Nebuchadnezzar, the like of which could not be found in any other portion of the ancient world. The Babylonian nation was composite.

The three dominant race elements in the people of the Empire were the Semitic, the Cushite, and the Turanian. By the first the Babylonians were allied with the Hebrews and Phœnicians; by the second, with the Arabs and ancient Egyptians; by the third, with the wild races of Northern Asia. With the progress of time, however, and the assumption of a fixed national type, the Semitic element in the Babylonian people became more and more predominant. After the conquest of the country by the Assyrians this tendency was increased. It was like the influence of the Normans among the Celtic inhabitants of Western France. The race-type assumed in Babylonia became assimilated to that of Assyria and the West. In the times of the later Empire the old antecedents had in a great measure been lost in a fixed form, hardly discriminable by a common observer from the well-known type of Assyria. It may, therefore, be assumed that the Babylonians of the time of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors were a race of Semites, varied and modified by many diverse lines of ancient descent.

In the physical appearance of the ancient Babylonians the historian must trust rather to the delineations found on the Assyrian monuments than to representations left us by native artists. Of the latter only a few portraits, drawn on cylinders, have been preserved; and even these seem to present the Babylonian form and features such as they were in the times of ancient Chaldæa, rather than at the high noon of imperial distinction. According to these delineations the people of Old Babylonia were slender and lithe—a rather thin visage and meager person. In later times, however, owing to the race-mixture already described, and especially to the ascendancy of the Assyrians, this slight personal aspect of the ancients was greatly modified. The Babylonians, like their northern masters, became strong and massive—a big-muscled, strong-limbed race, whose bone and brawn

were the impersonation of strength and endurance.

It can not, of course, be ascertained how faithful are the representations made by the Assyrian artists of the citizens of Babylon,<sup>1</sup> or to what extent those artists merely used the conventional types which they had been accustomed to chisel in the stones of Nineveh. At any rate, the later Babylonians as depicted by their northern conquerors have the same form and features as did the men who carved their portraits. A full account of the personal appearance of the Ninevites has already been given in a chapter of the Third Book.

In so far, then, as the physiognomy of the Babylonians differed from the well-known Assyrian type, the difference seems to be this: The eyes of the former people were larger and not so almond-shaped as those of the latter. The Babylonian nose was shorter and more depressed than the Assyrian, and the general expression was less determined and spirited. No doubt these slight departures from the type prevalent in its best development at Nineveh were the result of climate, and perhaps of some old inherited characteristics from the ancient Chaldæans.<sup>1</sup>

In the country of Susiana there seems not to have been any such amalgamation of races as existed in Babylonia proper. In the former province the old Cushite race remained comparatively pure down to the times of the Empire. In this case, also, our knowledge of the person and features of the people is due rather to Assyrian sculpture than to the native art of Susiana. The delineations found amid the ruins of the Ninevite palaces prove that there were two Susianian types, quite distinct and striking: the one, the ancient Cushite just referred to, and the other, a heavy southern face, having the leading peculiarities of the Negro. The two types are found side by side in the sculptures, the one face being high and Caucasian in its general contour, the other

<sup>1</sup> As a general rule a northern climate raises the features into greater prominence; a southern, depresses them. But in extreme latitudes the rule seems to be reversed, and in the high north the features fall.

marked with thick, protuberant lips, a receding forehead, a broad, thick nose, and having the head covered with the short crisp hair of Africa. Perhaps the people thus represented were the primitive people of Susiana, originally derived from the south, and yielding at a later date to a northern race represented in the other delineation.

Like most of the ancient peoples, the Babylonians wore their hair long. It does not appear, however, that to the matter of head adornment they gave so much attention as did the Egyptians and Assyrians. The sculptures show that the hair of the Babylonian was generally arranged in a single heavy curl, which hung stiffly over the shoulders. Sometimes the natural locks were left loose and allowed to fall about the neck. In some figures the hair descends to the waist, and is braided or bound in a sheath. In other cases the Assyrian fashion of a cluster of curls about the neck and shoulders, or a close mass on the back of the head, is followed. Perhaps the time was when the dandies and belles of Babylon looked to Nineveh for their styles as the world of absurdity now turns to Paris in the matter of personal adornment.

After the manner of Arabia most of the Babylonians wore long, flowing beards. A patriarchal appearance was thus given to many of the portraits. Sometimes the beard, when not curling, fell nearly to the waist, and sometimes when crisp clung closely to the face. The practice of shaving was common, and many of the delineations show the face smooth from the razor. As compared with the Assyrians the prevalent complexion of the Babylonians was dark and swarthy. Here again their old descent from the south had coöperated with the current effects of climate to give to the features that bronzed and tropical aspect which until to-day prevails in the country about the head of the Persian Gulf. Babylon lies four degrees nearer the equator than Nineveh, and the prevalence of the intense summer heats of the low plains of that region gives to the face a strong suggestion of Ethiopia.

Turning then from the personal habits and appearance of the people to their intellectual

and moral traits we find much to admire and not a little to condemn. In mental abilities they surpassed most of the ancient races. They had inherited from their ancestors, the old Chaldeans, a large store of primitive learning. The attainments of the Chaldeans in astronomical and mathematical knowledge have been proverbial in all ages, and this scientific lore was transmitted to the Babylonians. The latter people not only maintained but promoted the knowledge thus received from their predecessors. Their fame for learning resounded through all Western Asia, and echoes of it were heard in the eastern parts of Europe. The Greek historians and philosophers acknowledged their indebtedness to Babylonia for many valuable inventions and much abstract learning. The scholars of the Empire were in good repute, and their attainments appear to have been fully up to the measure of their times and opportunities. The age was unscientific and unscholarly, and the maintenance by any people of a respectable body of learning brought them deserved preëminence.

The Babylonians, however, were unable to rise above that superstition which has been the besetting sin of the human mind. They poisoned their scientific teachings with a vast mass of groundless imaginings deduced from their own vague fears and conjectures. Astronomy thus sank to the level of astrology, and science in general remained without a fixed limit of certainty. The same degeneration of learning took place as afterwards occurred among the Arabian philosophers of Baghdad, Cairo, and Cordova. For this reason the purposes had in view by the scholars of Babylonia fell below the ends of true science. To determine some occult or mysterious thing appeared to be the highest aim of their investigations. To interpret dreams, or to determine from the aspect of the stars and planets the destinies of human life, was the chief work of the Babylonian philosophy. The scientist became a soothsayer, and the sage degenerated into a rhapsodist or prophet. The mind had not yet learned in its investigations that in order to know, the hand of Thought must be laid implicitly in the hand of Nature.

In the matter of personal energy and ac-



tivity the Babylonians held a high rank among the nations of antiquity. They had the spirit of adventure. Alike on land and sea they went forth to acquaint themselves with the world and the world with them. They became, after the Phœnicians, the most distinguished merchants of the age. Their enterprise made them first in the marts of Asiatic commerce. Babylon became the great metropolis of Western Asia. Whatever mankind had to sell was offered, and whatever the needs of the world demanded was purchasable, in the emporiums of that great city. The life of the capital was the life of trade and commercial rivalry.

Under these conditions the Babylonians became greedy of gain. Avarice grew upon what it fed on, and the covetous spirit dominated almost every other feeling. Whatever would bring money was *for sale*. The domestic virtues were recklessly flung away for the means of further gratification. Every woman once in her life must offer herself to strangers publicly before the temple of Beltis; for by this means the crowd of strangers in the city would be increased. Maidens were sold at auction, for thus the wealthy princes and libertines of the surrounding nations would be drawn to the unscrupulous market. The father or brother, with his daughter or sister, stood ready to barter for money the pleasures due only to love.

The prime motive of all this avarice was the passion for luxurious living. Babylon was the paradise of gluttony and lust. Whatever ministered to the appetites and senses was eagerly sought and enjoyed without scruple. Adornment of the person, rich garments dyed with costly dyes, jewels of untold value, costly viands gathered perhaps from foreign lands, fragrant oils for perfuming the body—every thing that could excite or appease human desire was demanded and found and wasted in luxurious and riotous abandonment. The banquet and the feast brought drunkenness and revel. The tables were spread with riches which no appetite could consume. Dark wines were poured into goblets of gold. Tropical fruits were heaped in plates of silver. The palace halls were harems; for polygamy was the usage of the land and city.

It has not often happened in the history of mankind that such personal traits and habits as those of the Babylonians were blended—and partly redeemed—with strength and heroism. In spite of their luxury, the people of the Empire were fearless soldiers. Those who encountered them in the field found that there was iron under the velvet. The epithets which were applied to them by foreign historians show that their valor in war was equal to their abandonments of pleasure. One would have looked in vain among the bronzed cohorts of Nebuchadnezzar for the fragrant dandies who were recently drunken in Babylonian palaces.

Not only were the people brave and warlike, but with these heroic virtues they joined rapacity and cruelty. The Babylonian soldiery was not only without fear, but also without mercy. Woe to the enemy against whom the fierce hand was lifted! There was neither quarter nor compassion. Nearly always engaged in contests with surrounding nations, war became a profession. Accustomed to bloodshed and rapine, the soldiers of the Empire learned to destroy without discrimination, to kill without compunction. They rode their horses and drove their chariots over living and dead, crushing in an indistinguishable mass the innocent with the guilty. The tender and outraged form of woman was thrown with contempt across the brainless bodies of babes. From the mountains that frowned on the thither borders of Luristan to the gateway of Egypt, this iron-hearted, merciless, lascivious soldiery carried the banners of the Empire, and the nations cowered in fear before them.

In their methods and usages of war the Babylonians were very little impressed with the practices of civilized states. Their campaigns were characterized with needless violence and barbarity. The plan of colonizing insurrectionary inhabitants was rigorously followed. All the hardships of such removals were inflicted without mercy. Prisoners taken in battle were either killed or shamelessly mutilated. The unresisting inhabitants of provinces engaged in revolt were visited with indiscriminate vengeance. The best interests

of the Empire were many times sacrificed to the blind rage of revenge kindled against those whom a better treatment might easily have won to loyalty.

In the civil administration of the government the same ferocious methods were employed by the public officers. The suspected was condemned, and the condemned was executed. A fault was a crime. The displeasure of the king meant death. His frown was fatal. Torture was inflicted without mercy upon the objects of the royal wrath. Offenders were cut to pieces alive or were cast bound into fiery furnaces. Such was the spirit, the temper, of this terrible race of Asiatic conquerors. They spared not any thing that opposed them.

Following hard after these dissolute and vengeful methods of peace and war came that haughty and austere spirit for which the Babylonians were noted. Their successes were such as to make them deem themselves invincible. Pride came with power, as avarice from gain, and lust from lawless indulgence. The princes of Babylon walked abroad amid the splendors of the city, and contemplated with haughty egotism the magnificence of their surroundings. The city sat as a queen, and her royal broods of pampered idlers found little to check their selfishness and overweening pride.

These hard, cruel, and relentless features of Babylonian character were little softened by their religion. Albeit, the traveler visiting the great metropolis would have imagined that a people so devoted to the worship of the gods would be incapable of the deeds of cruelty. Temples rose on the right hand and the left. Retinues of priests, engaged in some work peculiar to their sacred offices, were ever in sight. Costly statues of the deities were set up in honor of the unseen, and to attract the gaze of the pious. In no other country, with the possible exception of Egypt, was the ceremonial of religion more costly and elaborate. The kings were the chief worshipers. Princes went devoutly to the temples. Royal favors were poured out without stint in the maintenance of the national faith. The names of all classes had a religious signification, con-

taining some sacred syllable from the name of a god. The seals of officers and the charms worn by men and women of fashion were nearly always embellished with some religious device or emblem. When the feast was spread and the wine was poured and the banqueters became uproarious, ever and anon a song in honor of the gods was heard above the rout.

It is said that in the noisy marts of Babylon, where each was striving to sell and get gain, a certain code of honesty prevailed. Perhaps it was such honesty as was current in the streets of mediæval Venice—a kind of politic observance of one's words and promises. Commercial transactions necessarily imply a certain kind of good faith which must be observed by those who trade; and it is rather to this condition than to any subjective trait of character that the alleged honesty of the Babylonian tradesmen must be referred. To this must be added another element of temper with which the people of the Empire have been credited by ancient historians. They are said to have preserved under all circumstances a calm and placid demeanor, little indicative of the fierce passions which were burning under the surface. This trait is, indeed, a quality of Asiatic manners quite universal in some of the oriental nations. It appears to accord with the character of the Chinese and Hindus and Turks to conceal under a calm and sometimes benignant demeanor the fiercest rage and most vindictive purposes of which the human heart is capable; and it is not unlikely that some race-characteristic of this sort has furnished the basis for the reputed equanimity of the Babylonians. However this may be, it is of record that they hid beneath a calm and imperturbable exterior the evil designs and bloody purposes which so much abounded in their characters and lives.

The Babylonians were a people dwelling mostly in cities. The rural population was relatively unimportant. It was in the crowded thoroughfares of the noisy metropolis that the national qualities were fully developed. The character of great Babylon, who said in her heart, "I sit a queen," may, therefore, be



properly considered in this part of the history of the Empire. Perhaps no other city of the ancient world, with the single exception of Rome, has occupied so large a share of the attention of the antiquary, the historian, and the philosopher.

BABYLON, the chief city and great capital of the Empire of Nebuchadnezzar, was situated on both sides of the river Euphrates in latitude  $32^{\circ} 39' N$ . The name "Bab-ili" signifies *the gate of God*. The modern town of Hillah occupies the ancient site. It was the largest and most opulent metropolis of the ancient world. In modern times the whole space once occupied by the city is dotted here and there with ruins, indicating in shadowy outline the site of palace and temple, of wall and battlement. Huge mounds of incredible extent and number show the traveler and the antiquary the tomb of one of the wonders of the world.

The exact size of ancient Babylon is not known.

Modern explorers have been unable to trace the course and extent of the walls. All authorities, both of ancient and recent times, agree that the city lay four-square, with the river running diagonally through the midst. But the remains of the ancient ramparts do not sufficiently indicate the lines of circumvallation. The old historians, therefore, several of whom visited the city and were eye-witnesses of her greatness, are the best, and, indeed, the only, sources of information. Herodotus declares the walls to have been fourteen miles in length on each side, or fifty-six miles in circumference. This would give an area of one hundred and ninety-six square miles. Ctesias, who also wrote from personal

observation, fixes the length of the walls at ten and a half miles on each side, or forty miles in entire compass, giving an area of one hundred and ten square miles. These are respectively the largest and the smallest estimates of the size of the city which have reached us from antiquity. The writers and travelers who followed Alexander in his victorious career report the dimensions of Babylon as intermediate between the figures given by Herodotus and those of Ctesias. The historian Rawlinson, after a careful review of all the facts, fixes the size of the city or inclosure within the walls at about one hundred



BABYLON.

square miles. This, though a much less area than is included in the modern cities of Paris or London, is far greater than the space covered by any other ancient city. Rome could have been two or three times inclosed within these walls, and Nineveh was hardly one-fifth as great in extent.

It must not be supposed, however, that this whole area of a hundred square miles or more, was actually occupied with the buildings of the city. An open space all around was left inside of the walls, and even in the parts covered with edifices or devoted to streets there was doubtless much unoccupied ground. Orchards and gardens and parks would intervene here and there, and certain parts would be

reserved for public or private improvements. It is believed that the city by the extent of space thus included within the walls, and not actually appropriated for building purposes, was rendered quite independent of outside support in case of invasion or siege; for the rich grounds which were not devoted to building could be made quickly available for gardens.

For an elaborate description of Babylon we are indebted to Herodotus. The streets were broad, and were laid out at right angles. The city was thus divided into blocks or squares. The walls were pierced on each side with twenty-five gates—a hundred openings in all. The gates were the termini of the streets, so that the whole inclosure was divided into six hundred and twenty-five great squares.<sup>1</sup> These in their turn were divided into smaller blocks by less important streets, and along these the imposing houses of the proud city were erected.

The buildings of Babylon were generally three or four stories in height. They were not, however, of so solid a character as those of Nineveh. Good building-stone, that *sine qua non* of architecture, was wanting in Babylonia, and its place had in a large measure to be supplied with less desirable materials. The walls were for the most part of brick, and the beams and frame-work were of the palm-tree, which constituted the one available timber of the country. Of the trunks of this tree the posts and columns were fashioned. About these were twined for decorations wreaths of rushes, and the whole was then covered with stucco, and made to resemble carved pillars of stone.

The Euphrates entered the city by one archway and found an exit by another. Along its whole course inside of the walls the banks were paved for a great distance with bricks laid in bitumen. Thus were constituted the wharves of Babylon. The river, moreover, was inclosed with a wall on either bank running parallel with his course, and preventing the waters from overflow in times of floods. These protecting walls were pierced with arched

openings at every street crossing, and through these openings the crowds of merchants and market people and idlers made their way down to the river bank, where boats were ever ready for conveyance to the other side. In case of high water the archways were shut, and the walls became continuous. In some places, instead of the ferry, the river was spanned with bridges, over which the crowds jostled from side to side. These bridges were built with a draw between the piers, so that communication could be easily cut off. As an additional means of passage, a tunnel (if we may believe Diodorus) was constructed under the channel from shore to shore. This passage was fifteen feet in width and twelve feet in height, being paved and walled and arched with bricks.

Perhaps the most remarkable single structure of Babylon was the great temple of Belus. It was founded four-square, in an inclosure a quarter of a mile long on each side. It consisted of a great tower or pyramid, on the top of which was placed the shrine of the deity. It was built somewhat after the manner of the structures of Egypt. The basement was a square of solid masonry, measuring over six hundred feet on each side. On this was another square of smaller proportions, and on this another, and so up to the summit. The ascent to the top was on the outside by means of steps, which wound around the edifice. The height of the temple was four hundred and eighty feet, being but a few feet less than that of the greatest Egyptian pyramid. The summit overtopped the city. From the shrine the whole panorama of Babylonian glory lay spread below as a picture. Palaces and marts, walls and river, quays and decorated boats, and beyond all the limitless plains of old Chaldaea, down to the distant horizon of the desert, furnished perhaps the most wonderful vision which the eyes of man beheld anywhere in the precincts of the ages that are dead.

The shrine on the summit of the tower contained originally three colossal statues; one of the god Bel, one of Beltis, and one of Ishtar. Here were two great censers and three golden bowls, the drinking cups of the three deities. In front of Beltis were placed two

<sup>1</sup> At the smallest estimate each of these squares contained nearly a hundred acres.



lions of gold and two silver serpents, weighing each thirty talents; and these were accompanied with two huge bowls of silver of the same weight as the serpents. These splendid treasures, however, were carried away at the time of the Persian conquest; and when Herodotus visited Babylon the shrine was dismantled. The statues were gone. So also the golden lions, the serpents, and the drinking-cups. Instead of these were set a golden table, and a couch draped with a rich covering. The old Greek historian found on his ascent to the top, about half-way up, a resting-place arranged with seats for those who ascended and descended the great tower.

The second and less pretentious shrine at the base of the edifice had also been despoiled by the Persians. Originally there had stood in this place a colossal human figure, wrought of solid gold, twelve cubits in height. In the time of Herodotus there remained only a small sitting image of Bel, with a golden table placed in front. Here the offerings of the worshipers were laid in the presence of the deity. In front of the basement of the temple were set two altars of sacrifice, and on these human beings were probably offered up to appease the anger of the Warrior Bel.

Not equal to the temple of Belus in height, but of greater ground dimensions, was the royal palace. This also was a quadrangular edifice, and was surrounded with three-fold ramparts of masonry, the outermost being nearly seven miles in extent. The inner wall measured more than two miles around, and the basement of the palace proper was of an incredible size. The two inner walls were faced with enameled bricks, upon which were pictured a vast array of animals. The scenes were chiefly from the chase. In one part a lion is thrust through with a spear, and in another a huntress hurls a javelin at a leopard. No complete description of the parts and general appearance of this great building has been preserved. It is only known that there were three bronze gates to the palace, so massive as to require machinery to open and shut them.

It was within the inclosure of this royal palace that were constructed the famous

Hanging or Elevated Gardens of Babylon, which constituted one of the "Seven Wonders" of the ancient world. Their construction was due to the caprice of Amyitis, the Median wife of Nebuchadnezzar, who, pining for her native hills, besought her royal spouse to create for her a landscape. A rectangle was selected, each side of which measured four hundred feet. Around this space were built a series of open arches, and upon these, serving as piers, other rows of arches were erected, after the manner of an ancient theater; and thus the vast structure arose to the height of seventy-five feet. Upon the summit was spread an abundance of earth, and here not only were seeds sown and flowers reared and shrubs transplanted, but trees of the largest growth, brought from distant provinces, were set in their native beauty. It was a miniature *Bois de Boulogne*, created on a hill of masonry.

On the banks of the Euphrates was set a huge hydraulic machine, working after the manner of the screw of Archimedes, and by this means water was raised in pipes to the summit and distributed about the Gardens; and to prevent this water from percolating to the masonry, layers of rushes and floors of bricks laid in bitumen and sheets of lead were interposed between the superincumbent earth and the supporting arches beneath. On the outside, at convenient intervals, were flights of steps leading to the top, and along the ascent were grottoes and resting-places, where the royal pleasure-parties regaled themselves at their ease: why should they hurry on such an excursion? Hurry is precipitated by those who fear that their pleasures will escape them.

Across the Euphrates from the principal palace stood another of smaller proportions. Around it, in the usual manner, was drawn a three-fold rampart, the outer wall measuring about three and a-half miles in circumference. These ramparts and the walls of the palace itself were covered with representations of hunting scenes and battles, drawn with considerable skill on the surface of enameled bricks. As in the case of the larger palace, not much is known of the appearance of the smaller structure. Within the halls and courts were set bronze statues, representing the gods

and the great kings of Babylon. Here were seen the mythical Ninus and Semiramis, surrounded by princes of old Chaldean renown.

The Walls of Babylon are associated in history and tradition with the Hanging Gardens as one of the Seven Wonders of the world.<sup>1</sup> These walls were, perhaps, the most marvelous structures of the sort ever erected. Their true dimensions, however, have never been determined. The Greek historians who visited Babylon have left contradictory accounts of the breadth and height of the vast ramparts surrounding the city. Nor is it likely that positive measurements would have been much more satisfactory, for these being made at different times would have represented the walls in various degrees of dilapidation resulting from the havoc wrought by besiegers and the slower ravages of time. Herodotus states the breadth of the walls at eighty-five feet, and the height at three hundred and thirty-five feet. Ctesias, without giving the breadth, puts the height at three hundred feet. Pliny gives the two dimensions as sixty and two hundred and thirty-five feet respectively. The lowest estimates of all are those given by Clitarchus and Strabo, who place the breadth at thirty-two feet and the height at seventy-five feet; but these authors must either have greatly underestimated the dimensions or else given measures of the ruined rampart rather than of the original walls. Perhaps a fair average approximation would be seventy-five feet for the thickness and two hundred and fifty feet for the height—measurements sufficiently vast to shock if not confound the credulity of modern times. The length of these stupendous battlements has already been given as being more than forty miles.

On the top of the great wall of the city were two hundred and fifty towers. These were arranged in pairs on the outer and inner edges of the rampart, and so broad was the

space that a four-horse chariot could be turned between them. The towers were square, and looked down, the outer row upon the surrounding country, and the inner, upon the city. So vast was the mass of masonry in these walls, so great their height and thickness, that they were an impregnable bulwark against any enginery of the times. They could be neither undermined nor surmounted.

Such was the famous capital of the Babylonian kings. In splendor and opulence and power it far surpassed any other city of ancient times. Through her magnificent streets swept the chariots of princes and monarchs. Out of her splendid gates poured the bronzed cohorts of well-nigh invincible soldiers, going forth to conquest. Into these same gates were driven the captives from a hundred vanquished provinces. Over her palaces and temples the oriental sun rose in unclouded glory. In the might of her power and renown she saw her rivals one by one expire, and in her triumph she arrogated to herself the rank and title of mistress of the world. But in the slow processes of destiny her own time came to suffer humiliation and downfall. No other city, reared by the genius and pride of man, has suffered a more complete extinction. Babylon is literally in the dust. Only scattered mounds, which the rolling years have covered with grass and shrubs, remain of the once mighty metropolis of the Babylonians. All else rests in the slumber of everlasting oblivion.

Journeying down the river from Baghdad to Hillah, the traveler of to-day comes unexpectedly upon a series of scattered heaps which, could they speak, would cry up from the ground, "We are Babylon!" As he proceeds, the mounds increase in size and frequency. In the intervals between them, should he disturb the soil, he finds an indistinguishable mass of broken bricks and pottery, slowly returning to dust. The mounds mark the sites of the palaces and temples, and the intermediate spaces the place of the common buildings and streets of the city. The northernmost of the great heaps is called *Babil* by the Arabs to the present day. It is a mound nearly four-square, with steep sides. The top

<sup>1</sup>The Seven Wonders of the ancient world were: the Pyramids of Egypt, the Pharos or Light-house of Alexandria, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Walls and Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Tomb of King Mausolus, the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, and the statue of Jupiter Olympus.



is flat, though traversed with several ravines, plowed out by time. The southern side of the elevation, extending a distance of six hundred feet, is tolerably well preserved. The eastern face, also, is easily traceable for a distance of five hundred and forty feet. The other two sides of the square have been worn down by the action of the elements, and reduced in some places to a level with the plain. The highest part of the mound is one hundred and forty feet above the surrounding country. The vast heap consists of a mass of sun-dried bricks, but in the outer wall the bricks are burnt and enameled, bearing the monogram of NEBUCHADNEZZAR. This great mound of Babil has been identified by antiquaries as the site of the temple of Belus.

A short distance down the river is the still larger mound known as EL KASR, or "the Palace." This remarkable elevation is two thousand one hundred feet in length by one thousand eight hundred in breadth. Its summit is seventy feet above the level of the plain. Like the other heaps, it consists of an infinity of crushed bricks and slabs and pottery. In the basement some passages have been explored, which are paved and arched with bricks. Some of the slabs which have been discovered in this mound bear inscriptions by which the place has been identified as the site of Nebuchadnezzar's palace. All the bricks which have been discovered in that vicinity bear his monogram, so that both tradition—as shown in the name of "the Palace" now borne by the ruin—and antiquities point unmistakably to this spot as that on which was reared the royal house of the great king.

Near the ruin of El Kasr is that of AM-RAN, so-called, according to tradition, because here was buried the prophet Amran-ibn-Ali. It is simply a heap, irregular in outline, and less striking than the Kasr ruin. It lies near the river bank, and one of the sides of the original structure was evidently lashed by the water when the river was full. The three sides of the elevation, which have been traced with some accuracy, measure respectively 3,000, 2,400, and 2,100 feet. The slopes of this mound, like many others, are furrowed with deep ravines, through which the rains of

two thousand years have found their way to the plain.

It is fitting in this connection to call attention to the fact that modern antiquaries have been divided in their opinion as to the site of the famous BIRS NIMRUD, or so-called "Tower of Babel." Some have attempted to identify this ruin with the Mound of Babil already described; while others, with better reason, have decided in favor of a more striking elevation near the city of Borsippa. This is distant from the heaps which mark the site of Babylon about eleven miles, and may, therefore, have *possibly* been included within the walls of the ancient city. There are reasons for believing, however, that such was not the case, though no doubt, owing to the vast extent of the rampart of the capital, the Birs Nimrud may have not been far distant from the walls. Be this as it may, and whatever difficulties may arise from fixing the site of the Tower away from Babylon, there can be little doubt that the Birs Nimrud of Borsippa is the true ruin of the ancient and gigantic structure.

It is from this greatest of the Babylonian mounds that the best knowledge of the character of the ancient temples or towers is derived. Some account of the general features of the Birs Nimrud and of the wonderful tower which constituted its essential part will accordingly be given in this connection. The plan of the structure has been carefully studied on the ground, and an accurate knowledge has thus been acquired of the dimensions and peculiarities of the original edifice.

The Birs Nimrud is the ruin of the great temple of Nebo. Its foundation was an exact square, each side being two hundred and seventy-two feet in length. The height of this first platform of masonry was twenty-six feet. Upon this was raised the second square of the same height as the first, the sides measuring two hundred and thirty feet. This second square, however, was not placed centrally over the first, but was displaced or drawn over towards the south-western edge of the lower platform. The displacement was such as to make the offset on one side measure thirty feet and on the other but twelve feet.

The third square was laid upon the second in precisely the same manner as the second on the first. This platform was also twenty-six feet in height, and measured one hundred and eighty-eight feet on each side. The fourth square was laid on the third in the same manner as the others; but the thickness of this platform was reduced to fifteen feet, the sides measuring one hundred and forty-six feet, and the same style of displacement towards the south-west side being observed.

Above the fourth stage in the Birs the effects of the ruin become more manifest, and estimates have to be substituted in many parts for exact measurements. The fifth square was of the same thickness as the fourth, and was laid in like manner. The sides of this platform and of the sixth and seventh squares measured one hundred and four feet, sixty-two feet, and twenty feet respectively. The thickness of fifteen feet for each platform was maintained to the top. On the seventh square was erected the shrine of the god, being a cube of fifteen feet in each of its dimensions. The whole height of the original structure was, therefore, one hundred and fifty-six feet, and the theodolite shows that the present height of the Birs is within *three feet* of the original elevation! The blasts of twenty-five centuries have not sufficed to level the house of Nebo with the Chaldean plain.

The great temple was an embodiment of Babylonian mythology. The seven platforms were dedicated to the seven planets known to the ancients. To each of these planets a color was assigned, according to the astrological notions of the Chaldeans. To the Sun was given the color of gold; to the Moon, silver; to Mercury, blue; to Venus, yellow; to Mars, red; to Jupiter, orange; to Saturn, black. To this planet was assigned the basement square, which was accordingly painted black. The second platform was dedicated to Jupiter, and was painted orange. The third was given to Mars, and was red. The fourth, or golden square, was assigned to the Sun; the fifth, or yellow, to Venus. The sixth, or blue platform, was sacred to Mercury; and the last was assigned to the Moon and received her color—silver. These colors were laid on in various

ways, some being burnt in the surface of the bricks, some painted, and the fourth and seventh squares—and with the latter perhaps the shrine itself—being faced respectively *with thin layers of gold and silver!* Such was the profusion of superstition!

It will thus be seen that the Tower of Nebo rose, like the temple of the Medes in Ecbatana, in successive bands of brilliant color. Viewed from a distance, the effect must have been such as to attract and please the eye.<sup>1</sup> Doubtless, when the sun flashed his splendors upon the brilliant hues of the great pyramid, or when the full-orbed moon in milder radiance diffused her light around the gigantic pile, the awe-struck worshiper may well have imagined that Nebo himself was enshrined on the summit.

A strange fact relative to the Birs Nimrud monument is that no stairways or other means of ascending to the top have been discovered. It is possible, however, that more extensive explorations would uncover flights of steps. The face of the first or basement square of masonry was in several places indented with niches, but these seem to have been for ornament rather than for statues. It may be remarked, also, that the third platform was less durable than the rest, owing to the fact that the bricks composing it were, in order to secure the blood-red color, only half-burnt, and were thus left perishable.

Antiquaries have decided that the sloping or receding side of the mound facing to the north-east is the true front of the Tower. It is also believed that within the platforms of masonry were apartments where the priests of Nebo lived; and it is not impossible that the means of ascent were contrived within rather than without the temple. Many of these things, however, have been left to conjecture and to such dim reasoning as the data will support. It is a disputed point, even, whether the approach to the Tower was simply a plain ascent, or whether there was an elaborate

<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that the Babylonians were either ignorant of the charming effects of the solar spectrum, or else they preferred to sacrifice beauty to their mythology. The beautiful contrasts of color were quite neglected in the arrangement of the bands on the successive squares.



vestibule which has gone to dust with the centuries. The latter view is sustained to a certain extent by the existence in front of the north-east slope of an irregular mass of ruins, which seem to indicate some kind of raised or columnar approach to the main edifice.

The city of BORSIPPA, near which the great Birs still stands, was among the most important of Babylonia. It was one of the ancient and venerated towns of Chaldaea. In the primitive ages, before the Assyrian Empire had arisen or Media had an existence, Borsippa was already a flourishing mart, adorned with temples and other public buildings. A sketch of these, and of the city itself, has been given in the Second Book.

After Borsippa may be mentioned the town of OPIS. It was situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, just below the confluence of the Gyndes. The ancient name of this city was Hupiya. The site is now marked by the ruins of Khafaji. In the days of its importance Opis was a large and flourishing emporium, receiving commerce from both the rivers which washed its walls. A short distance to the south, and on the same side of the Tigris, was

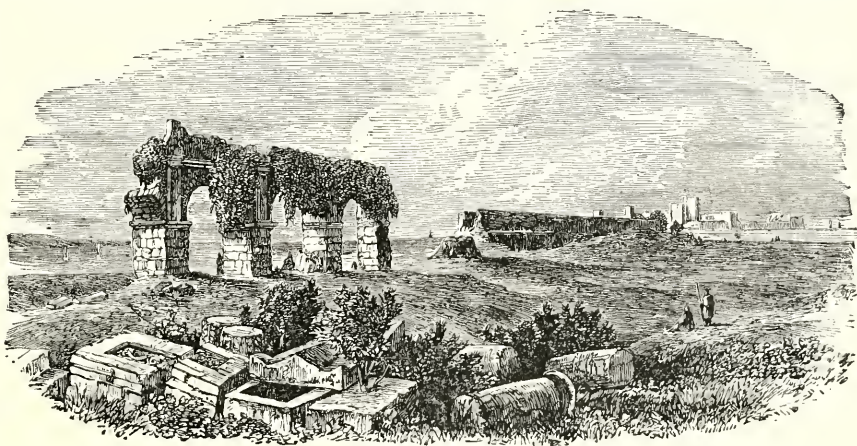
another considerable town called SITACÉ, which gave its name to the province in which it lay. Further down, on the shore of the Persian Gulf, was TEREDON, founded by Nebuchadnezzar, and containing in the palmy days of the Empire

many thousand inhabitants. The site has not been identified, owing to the fact that the shore line of the Gulf has receded and the whole district been covered with deposits. It is thought, however, that Teredon was located in the neighborhood of the modern town of Zobair.

Passing into the Provinces of the Empire the most notable city was SUSA, the capital of

Susiana. In the times of Babylonian greatness it was second only to Babylon. It lay, as already stated, between the two branches of the river Chaospes, on a beautiful plain, relieved, at the distance of twenty-five miles, with a background of mountains. It was one of the most healthful and attractive regions within the dominions of Nebuchadnezzar. Here was situated the ancient palace of the old native kings. It was reared upon a great mound, after the style of the Babylonian and Assyrian temples. The ancient city lay on the eastern side of the palace. Here, according to Herodotus, lived in primitive days KING MEMNON, who led an army to Troy to defend the city against the Greeks. Such was the beauty and salubrity of Susa and her environs that the place was regarded as a sort of second capital of the Empire. Several of the Babylonian monarchs here maintained summer residences, and the court of Susa, thronged with princes and native and foreign noblemen, almost rivaled the splendors of Babylon.

On the Upper Euphrates was CARCHEMISH, famous for more than one decisive battle fought



RUINS OF TYRE.

in her vicinity. The strategic position was one of great importance. By this route, as through a gate, the armies of Mesopotamia and the South must make their way in their invasions of Syria. Here the nations of the West—Egyptians, Phoenicians, Israelites—must debouch, if at all, into Babylonia.

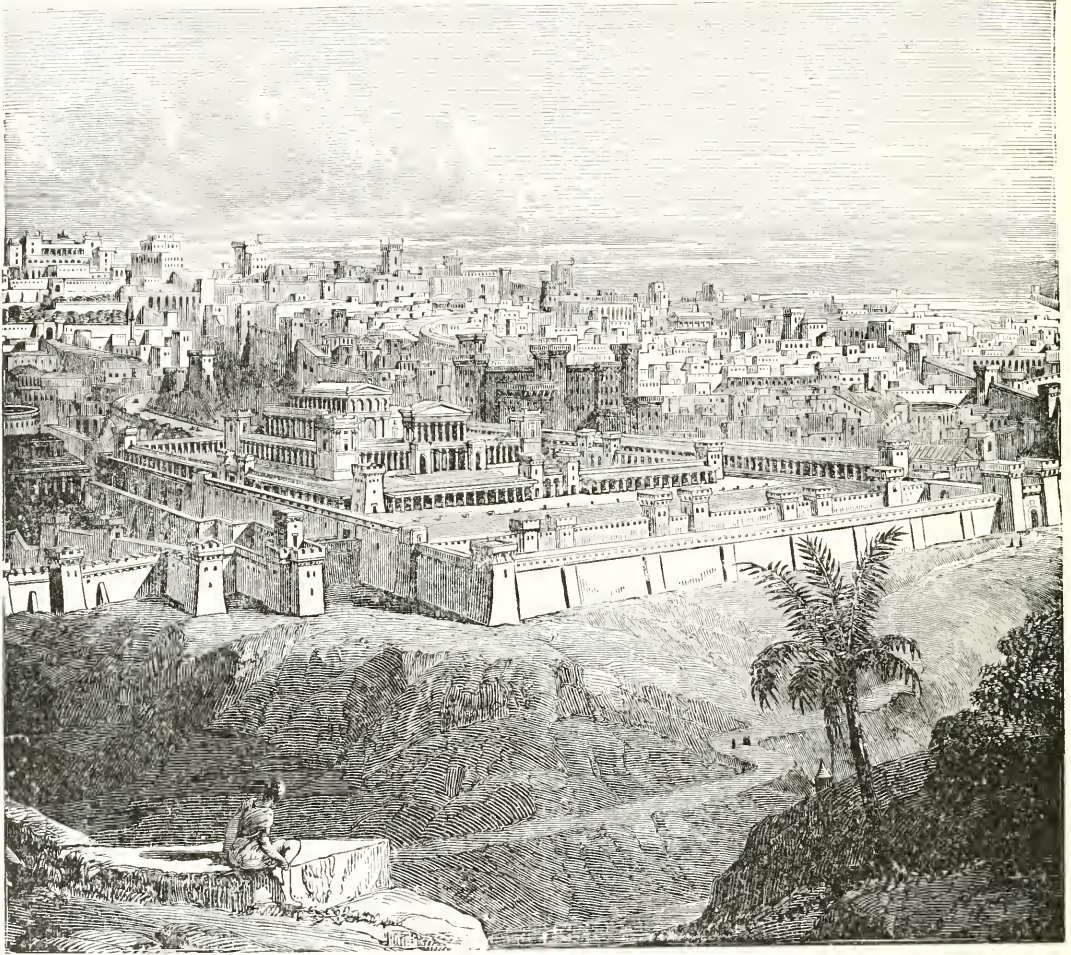
Far distant on the Mediterranean lay queenly TYRE, greatest of the maritime cities



of the Empire. The position was strong, easily defensible. At first the shore was chosen; but at a later date, when Tyre had grown to be the wealthiest metropolis of the West, the city was carried out to a littoral island, which became thenceforth the principal seat of business and defense. The shore-town was known as Old Tyre. The

its fortunate position and the genius of its inhabitants upheld its preëminence even down to the days of the Mohammedan conquests.

Next may be mentioned the rival city of SIDON—older, but less famous, than Tyre. It was situated on the coast, twenty-three miles north of the sister city. Sidon was the old



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people of the city were the most enterprising of their times. They were manufacturers, merchants, sailors; large-minded and courageous; ready for any enterprise, and quick in the spirit of adventure. Their manufactures were of matchless beauty and excellence. Kings, princes, and nobles were proud to wear the royal-dyed fabrics of Tyre. Several times in the vicissitudes of the nations the city was besieged, and a few times taken; but

metropolis of Phœnicia. The people of the country were proud to be called Sidonians in honor of their ancient capital. The period of greatest prosperity was from 1600 to 1200 B. C., when its commercial preëminence was already acknowledged by the Egyptians. Sidon was destroyed by the Persians in the year B. C. 351, as a punishment for rebelling against Artaxerxes III. It then became a provincial town of little importance. In



modern times the site of the old capital is marked by the seaport of Saïda.

On the route from Palestine to Egypt lay the city of ASHDOD. It was regarded as the western key to Syria, as Carchemish was the eastern. He who held the two strongholds just mentioned, and Tyre, the doorway to the sea, practically controlled the whole of the Syrian dominions; nor could the supremacy of these regions be long maintained save by the possession and control of these important cities.

Finally should be mentioned JERUSALEM, the capital of Palestine. It is situated fifteen miles west of the head of the Dead Sea. It is built on a high plateau of limestone about

two miles square, abutting against the mountains on the north. Here was originally the capital of the Jebusites, one of the Canaanitish tribes expelled by Joshua. Under David and Solomon, Jerusalem grew into importance. It became regarded as the Holy City of Israel, and acquired great fame as the principal seat of the worship of Jehovah. In the times of the Babylonian ascendancy the city, lying almost on the route between Babylon and Memphis, was many times an object of the cupidity or vengeance of the rival nations of the East and the West. Her demolished walls, ruined towers, pillaged temple, and depopulated streets frequently bore witness to obstinate defense and signal punishment.

## CHAPTER XXII.—ARTS AND SCIENCES.



OF the general character of the learning of the Babylonians, much may be inferred from what has already been said of the lore of the Chaldees.

The artistic tastes and philosophical opinions of the later people were derived from the culture of the ancient monarchy. The civilization of Babylonia was merely an expansion or development of that of Chaldæa, modified as it was, with a certain infusion of Assyrian opinions and practices.

If we begin with Architecture, we must traverse to a considerable extent the same ground which has been gone over in the account of the cities and temples of the Empire. Perhaps, however, some more specific notice of the style of building employed by the Babylonians may be added with propriety; and in producing such a sketch it is natural to begin with the royal palaces. These were, of course, next after the temples of the gods, the most important structures of the times.

It is an unfortunate fact that the Babylonian royal palaces have suffered more from the dilapidations of war and violence than have the temples; partly, no doubt, because

the latter were more solidly built, and partly because, in case of conquest, the temple is less likely than the king's house to suffer from the fury and lust of a victorious soldiery. The remains of the royal structures of the Babylonians furnish but a meager outline and dim shadow of the superb originals. But, as if in compensation for this loss, the old historians and travelers have left us materials tolerably abundant from which to fill out the the outline.

The palaces of Babylon, like those of Assyria, were built upon raised mounds or platforms. These mounds were square in shape, and were constructed of solid masonry. The elevation of the platform was fifty or sixty feet above the surface. The great mass of the square was constructed of sun-dried bricks, but a thick wall around the outside and a substantial pavement on the top were of burnt bricks or stone slabs carefully laid in bitumen. Upon this practically imperishable basis the palace proper was reared.

The material used in the body of the structure was burnt bricks of the finest and most durable quality. They were laid in a kind of cement which, if we may judge from the way in which it has withstood the elements

for centuries, was superior to any thing of like sort employed in modern masonry. The walls of the building were of enormous thickness. The ground-plan was a rectangle, the sides of the square being parallel with those of the foundation. It is unfortunate that no remains of a Babylonian palace have been discovered in a state of such preservation as to furnish authentic data for the restoration of the edifice. Only a few facts can be educed from the crumbling *débris* on the summits of the mounds. In general, the walls were straight. They were high enough to be imposing. They were not pierced with windows or other openings. They were strengthened by buttresses, built at intervals along the face. They were decorated here and there with sculptured slabs, set in both the inner and the outer surface. The figures with which these were adorned were generally small, but were executed with care and with considerable artistic skill.

It was rather, however, to the device of color than to the work of the chisel that the palace walls owed their beauty. On the smooth surface of the bricks the Babylonian painters exhausted their resources in depicting such scenes from the chase and the fight as could please the eye or flatter the vanity of the royal occupants. What the splendid sculptures of Nineveh furnished to the Assyrian kings in the way of artistic pleasures, that the painter's brush in some measure supplied for the princes of Babylon. An abundance of these pictorial representations have been found on the great mound of El Kasr.

Curiosity to know the details—the height, the number of stories, the internal arrangement—of these Babylonian palaces will, perhaps, remain forever ungratified. No doubt, in altitude, they greatly overtopped the three- and four-story houses. As the king was lifted up above his subject, so his abode and the abodes of his princes and nobles were raised on high above the un aspiring cityful. Another conjecture is that the palaces were lighted through the roofless space overhead, and not by means of windows. The extreme mildness of the climate would justify such a supposition, and the same is attested by the fact that no windows have been found in the

walls. Another feature of the palaces, not conjectural, is the drainage, which was carefully provided for by subterranean passages in the basement.

An examination of the meager remains of the bridges across the Euphrates and of the great wall around the city does not indicate that the Babylonian architects were especially skillful. The piers of the bridges, however, were correctly built, with a sharp angle against the current of the river. In general, the buildings of Babylonia, particularly those of the great capital, were loftier and more imposing than the structures of other oriental countries.<sup>1</sup> No doubt they were equally superior to those of other nations in respect to ornamentation and general structure and adaptation.

In the manufacture and preparation of building material, the Babylonians surpassed only in the production of bricks. Like their ancestors, the Chaldeans, they had two varieties—those dried in the sun and those burnt in kilns. The former were used only in the interior of thick walls and in building great platforms and buttresses, wherein the action of the elements could not be felt. All the exposed portions of structures were of the kiln-baked variety—very hard and perfect. The finest were of a yellow color, and were so firm as to be practically imperishable. Another very superior quality were of a bluish tinge, sometimes almost black, and were well-nigh as hard as stone. The softer sorts—half-burnt varieties, etc.—were red or pink, and could be easily broken into fragments.

The sizes employed were variable, but the standard make were from twelve to fourteen inches square on the face and three or four inches thick. For the corners and angles sizes and shapes were used which were adapted in form to the situation. The bricks were all cast in molds, after the manner of modern times, and were stamped on one face with a monogram or inscription. The die was always

<sup>1</sup> In the present day the houses of the people of the countries described in the text are rarely, if ever, more than two stories in height. According to Herodotus, those of ancient Babylon were "three or four stories high."



sunk below the surface, so that the design, whatever it was, should not be injured or broken away in laying or handling. In building walls or other masonry, the bricks were generally laid horizontally, though in some instances the vertical position was preferred. In other cases both plans were adopted, a row being set vertically after each horizontal layer.

The material used to keep the bricks in place was cement, and of this there were three varieties. The first was composed of a mixture of common clay and chopped straw. In building, this mortar was used more abundantly than by modern masons, being sometimes laid on to the thickness of two inches. The second sort of cement was composed of bitumen, and was identical with that employed by the Chaldeans. This variety was used in basements and pavements, and especially in those parts of structures which were exposed to the action of water. The third kind was composed of lime, and was of a quality unsurpassed, perhaps unequaled, by that employed in any other country. Until to-day, the great masses of bricks piled up in the basement squares and thick walls of the Babylonian ruins are held together with a tenacity which seems to defy alike the insidious onset of the elements and the stroke of the antiquary's hatchet.

That which is the most striking feature of the present ruins of the Babylonian plain, and which, no doubt, *was* most striking in the original edifices, is their great magnitude. They are imposing by their size. In this respect they are allied with the monuments of Egypt. There is about them a certain impressive grandeur, which, next after the gigantic structures of the Nile valley, strike the beholder as the most majestic remains of antiquity. They make up in massiveness what they lack in beauty, and their sameness and silence heightens rather than weakens the vision of vanished greatness.

Passing from architecture to Painting and Sculpture, but little is found to admire. Only a few fragments, mutilated by time and accident, have survived to the present; and from these it may not be properly judged

what was or was not the attainment of Babylonian art. Of sculpture, a half-dozen broken pieces have survived. Of these the most important is the figure of a colossal lion standing over the prostrate body of a man, found on the top of the mound of El Kasr. Artists and antiquarians have pronounced the work of little merit. The figure of the lion in many parts deviates from the outlines of nature, and in some features is distorted. The form of the man is so clumsily done as to be hardly distinguishable. A certain pose and grandeur of general effect, faintly suggestive of the sculptures of Egypt, are all that redeem the group from contempt. Of figures modeled in clay a few have been discovered. The best is that of a mother and child. The statuette is no more than three and a half inches in height. The mother sits. The child is encircled in the left arm. The figures are nude, the attitudes graceful. The general effect is pleasing, as if deduced from nature by an artist. The figures were originally glazed with some sort of enamel, which has peeled off, exposing the clay.

Of bas-reliefs the best specimen is that of one of the Babylonian kings. The piece is now preserved in the British Museum. It is a black slab, upon the surface of which the figure is engraved with excessive details of ornament. There is very little grace or artistic skill displayed in the work, though the *finish* is almost as fine as that of the Assyrian sculptures. The proportions of the figure are tolerably well preserved, and there is a certain stiff dignity in the attitude not wholly unmeritorious. The king with the left hand grasps his bow; in the right he holds his arrow. His eyes are fixed, like those of Apollo on the typhon—but here the likeness ends. The whole figure, with the exception of the face and neck and hands, is covered with elaborate ornamentation, showing all the details of the royal garment.

Turning to animal forms, Babylonian art appears to a better advantage. A common subject of the artist was the dog. The creature was presented in bas-relief, generally on a black stone slab. His canine excellency is on guard. He rises on his fore-feet, and will

spring upon the intruder if he advances further. The piece is evidently a kind of *cave canem*, suitable for halls and doorways. Another figure, also in relief, is that of a great bustard, executed with much spirit. The bird strides, and has the manner of nature. On the cylinders are figures of cows, deer, monkeys, goats—sometimes figured with what may be called artistic ability.

In the matter of engraved gems, the art of Babylonia is tolerably represented in modern museums. The peculiarity of such work is its quaintness. Sometimes the artist seems to have caricatured the thing represented. In one gem the central figure is that of a man with *two elbow joints* in one of his arms! In the same group two of the figures menace each other with their fists, while two grotesque animals in another corner make grimaces. The whole is purposely done in the ridiculous or satirical spirit. In some pieces the whole group is composed of animals intentionally misshapen and ludicrous. They make faces. One takes the head of another in his mouth. The wrong head is put on the body. A bird is finished as a fish, and a goat ends like a monkey. Among these odd conceits a human figure appears. He would assert human dignity by kicking out at the well-pleased monsters around him. It is a mark of grotesque fancy, perhaps tipped with satire. In other gems there is a sort of procession of nondescript creatures flung from the fancy of the artist. Some are comical; some, quaint; some, it may be, serious. Generally a man brings up the rear—human intelligence following a nondescript cavalcade of the lower creatures in the march of folly! It is hard to discover whether the spirit of the work is that of profound irony or of mere caprice.

One feature of the gem-engraving practiced by the Babylonians may well excite some wonder. This relates rather to the mechanical than to the artistic part of the process. By what means was the *cutting* of the stones accomplished? In some cases, as when the softer gems such as lapis-lazuli, serpentine, and alabaster were used, the engraving would be easily accomplished. But in the case of the hard stones, such as cornelian, jasper,

agate, quartz, syenite, loadstone, and feldspar, it is difficult to understand how the cutting could be accomplished—what kind of tools and devices could be employed in an unscientific age to reach the required result. The use of emery seems to have been a necessary part of the process. From the nature of the work done it appears that revolving points of steel or some other substance equally hard and tenacious would have been a *sine qua non* of the lapidary's bench. It should be observed that the Babylonian gems indicate clearly the superiority of the mechanical over the artistic part of the process—a rare fact in the history of ancient art. Modern curiosity may well be racked to know by what kind of contrivances the work was accomplished.

Another fact still better calculated to excite our astonishment is the minuteness of much of the engraving. It seems impossible that it could have been done without the use of magnifying lenses. Indeed, the supposition of the use of such devices is not wholly unwarranted. It is certain that the manufacture of glass was known and practiced by several of the nations of antiquity, and the actual discovery by Mr. Layard, at Nineveh, of a plano-convex lens of rock crystal is proof positive of the existence of such knowledge in Assyria. Why not in Babylonia? The gem-engraving of that country seems to have demanded some such scientific expedient.

It is not unlikely that the best and at the same time most peculiar species of Babylonian art has perished. This was pictorial enameling. It was practiced on the surface of glazed bricks. The almost universal decay of the great walls and bastions and buttresses of the palaces and temples has carried down to dust the artistic designs with which they were embellished. The ancient historians bear record to the striking and beautiful effects which were achieved in the surface decorations of the public and private buildings of Babylon, but the actual evidence has crumbled away and the antiquary is put at fault. What is known with respect to these remarkable pictorial representations is that their subjects were selected chiefly from battle and the chase, and that nearly all conspicuous build-



ings were distinguished by their presence. Just as the artistic sense of the Assyrians found expression in the abundant sculptures of Nineveh and Calah, so the taste of the Babylonians sought and found gratification in the colored designs of enameled walls. The prophet Ezekiel speaks only common fame when he refers to "the image of the Chaldæans, portrayed upon the walls with vermilion." He also describes the pictures thereon as being "girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldæa, the land of their nativity." He further says that as soon as Aholibah saw these images she *doted upon them*, and sent messengers into Chaldæa. Such was the influence of these striking pictures upon those who visited the great city. All the facts in the case go to show that according to the then standards of art criticism the enameled pictures on the walls of Babylonian buildings were of a high degree of excellence. The known skill of the Assyrians in sculpture at a much earlier date, as well as the kinship and similar tastes and activities of the two peoples, render it inherently probable that the Babylonian artists achieved with the brush something of the same distinction attained by their northern rivals with the chisel. It also stands to reason that the artists of the two nations would alike select from war and the chase the principal subjects for delineation.

In the application of color the Babylonians seem to have followed nature. The tints most employed were white, blue, yellow, brown, and black. Red was not much used. These colors were distributed to different objects according to the fitness of things. Water was represented with pale blue, and the earth with a shade of yellow. Lions were painted a tawny hue, and spear-heads black.

Chemical analysis shows that the pigments employed on the decorated walls were essentially the same as those used by modern artists. The yellow was principally an oxide of iron; the blue was produced by the oxidation of cobalt or copper. The red was a sub-oxide of the last-named metal. The yellow was sometimes the antimoniate of lead.

The designs were painted on the surface of brick walls before the glazing was applied. Or, if the bricks were glazed before they were laid, then the design was laid on with reference to the position which the bricks should occupy in the structure. The latter supposition is borne out by the fact that the bricks were so laid, and indeed so made, as to give the figure represented on the surface a *raised character*, like that attained in bas-relief. This indicates no little skill in both the artist and the artisan. The effect could only have been reached by modeling a large mass of clay with the desired figure in the surface, and then cutting the same into bricks to be afterwards set in the same relative position in the wall. All of this implies a kind of designing, and an adaptation of means to ends, of which modern workmen need not be ashamed.

In the matter of metallurgy the Babylonians had considerable attainments. Of the precious metals, gold and silver were abundantly employed. Of these were made the vessels and utensils of the palace and the temple. The chief of the baser metals were iron and lead. The alloy, known as bronze, was more important than either. Of this were made the magnificent gates and doors for which the great buildings of Babylon were famous. The art of casting metals was well known. The golden images found about the temple altars and shrines were generally cast in a mould. Sometimes, however, the idol was of baser stuff, plated with the precious metal. The silver statuettes were in like manner cast molten. The gold and silver facings so much used as a covering for walls and furniture were thin plates hammered into proper shape. The great castings, such as enormous bronze gates, doors, portcullises, etc., were of a sort to be set in fair rivalry with the works of modern times. Of smaller castings of the same material there were a multitude: bracelets, armlets, dagger handles, small figures in imitation of the human form, or the forms of animals. Such were set as decorations about the halls and hearths of the Babylonians.

The pottery of the nation was as good as the fine wares of Assyria, from which it differed in no essential particular. Brick-making

was better understood than by the Ninevites, with whom stone was more prized. From the kilns of Babylon all kinds of cups and vases and jars were produced of good quality and in great abundance. The colors preferred were yellow and red and green. The vessels thus produced were symmetrical, being evidently the work of the potter's wheel. They were of elegant shapes, but were without ornamentation, the only exception being in the case of vases, which sometimes have a raised band carried around the exterior surface in the form of a spiral. Glazing was frequently employed, both without and within.

Among the other arts practiced by the Babylonians was that of glass-blowing. Several bottles and vases produced by this method have been found in the ruins. These articles, however, are not very perfect either in design or execution. Every specimen is more or less warped from symmetrical outlines. The glass composing them is in some instances tolerably clear; in others tinted with coloring matter. There are some grounds for believing that the artisans of the country were able to produce large masses of solid glass, but no actual discovery has verified the supposition. The historian Pliny has contributed a rather apocryphal story about the presentation to an Egyptian king by one of the Babylonian monarchs, of a huge block of green glass, or emerald, six feet in length and four and a half feet broad.

No nation of antiquity, with the possible exception of the Phœnicians, surpassed the Babylonians in the manufacture of textile fabrics. The products of the factories of the capital were famous as far as civilization extended. As far west as Athens and Carthage the carpets of Babylon were prized above those of every other country. The dyes employed were imperishable, and the designs used were artistic and beautiful. The figures of animals, real and fabulous, were woven into the patterns with wellnigh as much skill and delicacy as by the looms of modern times.

In like manner cotton goods were produced of the finest and best quality. Brilliant dyes and beautiful patterns made these fabrics so attractive that the kings and princes preferred

them for garments. Such goods were exported to foreign countries, and were the admiration of the connoisseurs of Sardis and Damascus and Memphis. Nor was the manufacture of linen less conspicuously successful. At Borsippa and other places in Babylonia factories were established which produced great quantities of linen fabrics, these being the goods commonly worn by the people.<sup>1</sup> The nobles preferred cotton and woolen garments.

It is the misfortune of nations living in a pre-literary age that their learning is either unknown or discredited by posterity. The lore of the Chaldees perished for want of books. The tradition of it only is preserved in the literature of the Western nations. But this reflected light has indicated ancient Chaldaea as the birthplace of several branches of learning, most notably the science of astronomy. Over these old Babylonian plains was arched a cloudless sky. The great heats of midday made the calm twilights and starry nights of summer the time of out-door meditation. Overhead the benignant planets pursued their everlasting courses. The upturned face of that unscientific age caught from the bending heavens the first sublime lessons of the universe. To trace the paths of familiar stars, to watch the silent revolution of the celestial wheel, to note recurrences and then to expect them,—these were but natural and necessary stages in the sublime lore of the heavens.

Thus would soon be developed a correct perception of the differences between the planets and stars, and a knowledge of the diverse laws by which they were respectively governed. By and by the moon, as being a wanderer, was associated with those five planetary bodies discoverable by the naked eye, and finally the sun himself was added as the seventh globe of fire which seemed to change place among the fixed orbs of the skies. The paths of these seven "planets" were carefully mapped, and the rudiments thus obtained of

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note how the various products of manufacture will be reversed in value in the processes of civilization. The relative values of cotton, linen, woolen, and even silk goods have been many times interchanged in the course of history. The same may occur again.



a true science of astronomy. Of course, the fundamental hypothesis of the solar system was at fault, as it continued to be until the days of Copernicus.

Beyond their knowledge of the planetary system, the Babylonians made considerable progress in the study of the fixed stars. These were arranged in groups and constellations, and upon them was conferred the imperishable poetry of names. The imagination of the observer caught a resemblance in the heavens to the things on earth. The figures of the great animals of the terrestrial sphere were transferred to the celestial, and sky-maps were drawn with the outlines of these figures. The poles of the heavens were fixed, and Arcturus and Orion took their place, the one with his bow and the other with his club, in the blue pavilion spangled with points of fire.

From the Babylonians to the Greeks, from the Greeks to the Arabians, from the Arabians to Modern Europe, from Modern Europe to the world, this old star lore of the East, with its quaint uranography of animals and men and monsters, has been transmitted, and the science of to-day and to-morrow seems unable to cast the spotted skin of the past! The Zodiac is there with its Bull and its Lion and its Virgin, and who shall ascend into heaven to take them down?

In the British Museum is a conical, black stone upon which are figured the Signs of the Zodiac as taught by the Babylonian astronomers. Several of the outlines are identical with those presented on a modern celestial sphere. The Ram, the Bull, and the Scorpion are easily recognized among the groups, and the genius of ancient Superstition makes comical grimaces at the genius of recent Folly.

After the manner of their system and under the limitations of their knowledge, the Babylonians labored at the practical problems of the heavens. Eclipses were calculated and predicted; the phenomena sometimes happening as foretold and sometimes falling wide of the times specified. Of course, the calculations were based upon observations of recurrences and other data of a misleading character rather than upon the well-known principles of modern astronomy. Certain facts were

recognized, however, with respect to the motions of the sun and moon, tending to make the calculations of the Babylonian seers more trustworthy than at first sight would be conjectured. In the first place, the sun's course through the Zodiac was carefully traced. The signs of the great belt were called the "Houses of the Sun"—for there the deity seemed to lodge from month to month. In like manner the path of the moon was accurately mapped through the same zone of the heavens. The "Houses of the Moon," marking the monthly stages of the silver orb, were located as were the "Houses of the Sun." Albeit, the two classes of "Houses" did not exactly coincide, owing to the inclination of the moon's orbit; but the relations of the two paths through space were so well determined as to afford a fair basis of expectancy in the matter of eclipses. The laws of nature, however, were not sufficiently understood to remove such striking phenomena from the realm of superstition to the cool domain of Science. The Babylonians, like the other peoples of antiquity, looked on and shuddered while the great mystery of darkness was accomplished. Lists of eclipses as recorded by the astronomers of Babylon and preserved by the Greek historians have been verified by modern mathematicians, and have been found correct<sup>1</sup> in time and extent of obscuration.

The Babylonians also succeeded in a tolerably accurate measurement of time. They fixed the length of the year at three hundred and sixty-five days, six hours, and eleven minutes—a very close approximation. By means of the *gnomon* and the *polos*, two varieties of sun-dial, they kept the hours of the day. The period of the moon's revolution in her orbit was accurately determined, and the relative—though not the absolute—distances of the planets from the earth and from each other seem to have been known. It is also in evidence that some of the secondary planets, as the four moons of Jupiter, had been observed and figured by the sages of Babylon.

If we look at the *uses* to which the scholars

<sup>1</sup>The five most conspicuous examples—all being eclipses of the moon—belong to the years B. C. 747, 721, 720, 621, and 523.

of the Empire put their astronomical knowledge, there is less to admire. The astrological purpose was dominant. The astronomer was expected to inquire under what stars a person was born, and to determine therefrom his destiny. The fortunes and fate of human life were to be deduced from the aspects of the skies. Sometimes the celestial influence, which began with birth and ended only with death, was benign, and sometimes malignant. A particular star presided at the entrance of each man into the world, but to determine the entire destiny of his life the astrologer must know the aspect of the whole heavens at the moment of his entrance upon life. From these higher offices, relating to the weal or woe

of human beings, the Babylonian sages descended to such topics as meteorology. They predicted the weather, the apparition of comets, the coming of the earthquake. They kept lists of lucky and unlucky days, and pointed out in a semi-prophetical way the portents of doom to particular countries and peoples. Peace, prosperity, and plenty; famine, pestilence, and war, were all determined from the overruling influence of the stars.

Such was the mixture of scientific truth and vague superstition in the beliefs and scholasticism of the Babylonians, who from the great city of the Euphrates stretched out so proudly the imperial rod over the nations of Western Asia.

## CHAPTER XXIII.—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.



CONCERNING the Manners and Customs of the Babylonians, a great deal may be inferred from what has already been said respecting the other aspects of their civilization. The monuments of the country being so meager as compared with the imperishable records left us by the primitive Egyptians and the Assyrians, we are more at a loss to deduce what may be called the Personal Life of the people of Babylonia than in the case of the ancient inhabitants of the valleys of the Nile and the Tigris. We are left, therefore, rather to the old historians than to contemporaneous inscriptions, in determining the personal habits and individuality of the subjects of Nebuchadnezzar. To Herodotus especially are we indebted for copious descriptions of what he saw and heard in Babylon.

Beginning with the subject of dress: the people of the lower classes generally clad themselves in a linen garment reaching to the feet. Over this a woolen tunic was worn, and this was surmounted with a white cape. The feet were sometimes incased in checkered shoes with wooden bottoms. The hair was usually

worn long, and was gathered close to the head under a sort of miter or turban. A cane or walking-stick, with a carved handle, was a universal accompaniment, especially in the hands of gentlemen of leisure. The miter and cape and woolen tunic of the Babylonian attire were thrown off as convenience suggested, and the figures frequently appear merely with the long linen robe. The worshipers in the temples are generally bare-headed, and wear to their devotions a peculiar embroidered tunic, different from that worn at labor. The rich man at the altars of the gods is arrayed in more costly style. He wears a miter, and his garments are longer and more elaborate than are those worn by the peasantry. He is pictured with a goat in his arms, or some other sacrifice ready to be offered. In adjusting the long or principal garment, the Babylonians left the right arm and shoulder bare, somewhat after the manner of the Romans. Around the waist the clothing was held securely with a belt.

A different style of dress was that of a short coat with sleeves, fringed on the sides, reaching to the knees. This also was worn by worshipers in the temples, though sometimes in every-day life by peasants. As a general rule



the feet of the common people are bare, though kings and noblemen are not so represented. Other parts of the royal attire were distinguished both in pattern and material from the dress of the people. His gown descended to the ankles. It was richly fringed and embroidered. A vestment worn over this came as low as the knees, and was adorned with tassels. In addition to the regular girdle two cross belts, perhaps to support the monarch's quiver, are seen on the royal person. The miter or turban was of great height, cylindrical in shape, and expanded towards the crown. It covered nearly the whole head, resting close upon the brows. The material was of some kind of felt-cloth, elaborately wrought and brilliantly dyed to please the kingly fancy.

The chief articles of mere adornment were the bracelets. The figures on the cylinders indicate that the kings had the good taste to leave earrings to others. In some instances collars or necklaces were worn by royal personages, and these articles are sometimes found about the necks of the gods. The collars were made of joints or rings of gold or silver, and the bracelets were plain bands of the same precious metals.

As in most of the ancient countries, the garments of the priests were costly and elaborate. The principal article was a long robe, ornamented from top to bottom with a series of flounces. Over this was placed an open jacket, finished in the same style as the robe. Down the back hung a long scarf or ribbon. The head-dress was a tiara or miter, different in pattern from those turbans worn by other people of high or low degree. Sometimes the priestly cap was pointed with horns in a way to suggest the sacerdotal head-gear of the Egyptians. The priests went barefoot before the altars of the gods.

Of military armor and dress not so much is known as of the garments of the priestly caste. The principal articles worn by soldiers were helmets, breast-plates, and shields. The material used was bronze. The articles carried were bows and arrows, spears, daggers, and clubs. The bows are of the usual pattern, and might be mistaken for those of

American Indians. The curve extends from end to end; the length is about four feet. The quiver, too, is the ordinary sheath, such as is used by the half-civilized races of to-day. The arrows are three feet in length, barbed with a metallic point, feathered and notched to receive the string. In the soldier's girdle were worn his daggers, many specimens of which have been discovered and are preserved in modern museums. No battle-axes have been found, but the same are represented in several patterns on the cylinders. The drawings indicate that the weapons were rude and clumsy, such as are employed by people just emerging from savagery.<sup>1</sup>

The Babylonian army embraced the three divisions of infantry, cavalry, and chariots. The tactics and discipline were essentially the same as those employed by the Assyrians. A few representations of war-chariots have been found on the cylinders. The pattern and equipment are like those seen in the sculptures of Nineveh, but the drawings are rude, and the details can not be determined. The cavalry was regarded by foreign nations as the most formidable division of the army. The prophet Habakkuk, who had occasion to know whereof he affirmed, says of the Babylonian soldiery: "They are terrible and dreadful. From them shall proceed judgment and captivity; their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves. And their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every stronghold; for they shall heap up the earth and take it." A like fame is given to the Babylonian cavalry by Jeremiah, and others of the Hebrew seers. In later times, however, as appears from the distribution of the forces in the army of Xerxes, the horsemen of Babylonia were less esteemed than the infantry, perhaps on account of the superior reputation which had now been attained by

<sup>1</sup> A battle-axe, pictured on a clay tablet discovered in the ruins of Sinkara, is thought, from its primitive pattern, to have belonged to the Chaldaic period.

the cavalry of the Medes and Persians themselves.

The Babylonian infantry was a vast mass of half-disciplined soldiers, made up of natives, provincials, and foreigners. They were irregular, both in movement and weaponry. Each of the subject nations sent its own contingent of troops, armed and equipped according to the manner of the respective countries. It was a courageous host, having an almost fatalistic contempt of death, inspired by the hope of booty and fired with the lust of conquest. In marching, the army spread itself over the invaded country, destroying every thing within reach. The populace was driven before them into the towns. These were besieged and taken with every accompaniment of violence and barbarity. If the walls were weak, they were soon leveled with battering-rams. If the ramparts resisted such assault, then mounds of earth were heaped outside until the fortifications were overtopped, and the infuriated soldiery poured in to their repast of blood and plunder. Sometimes, when the walls were high and strong and ably defended, years were consumed in the siege, the vengeance of the besiegers gathering head to burst with the excess of long-restrained rage upon the fated city. Woe to the rebellious, and a double woe to them that resisted!

The campaigns of the Babylonians were waged without much regard to political expediency. The object had in view was rarely, if ever, the national development of the Empire. Passion was the mainspring of war. When that failed, the priests were called in with their hocus-pocus to decide what nation *should be next invaded!* In the progress and management of the invasion the priests were as much relied on as the generals to give direction to the movements and to explain the failures and successes of the army. The wars, indeed, were regarded as the avenging bolts of the Babylonian gods, hurled against the impudent deities of other lands. Meanwhile, if a royal indigestion precipitated a bad dream, or if the king was from any cause troubled in his cogitations, all must be interpreted and made clear by the clever gentlemen who wore the robes of the altar. The only compensa-

tion to this mutual superstition was that if the priests failed to satisfy the king's spirit with their rendering of his troubles, or if they gave advice ending in disaster which could not be explained away, their gods were rarely able to save them from their master's wrath.

Looking more closely at the priestly profession, not merely in their relations to military management, but more particularly as to their regular duties in the temples, we find them, as were the priests of Egypt, the possessors of a certain body of learning and traditions. They had rules and precedents, dogmas and ceremonials. They had methods of purification, and laws for conducting the sacrifices. They had principles of interpretation, and a canon of criticism relating to portents and omens. Their wisdom was in high repute. From king to peasant no one might question the infallibility of their oracles.

It is not certainly known to what extent there was in Babylon a guild of secular scholars distinct from the priests. There are some reasons for believing that such a class of persons existed; and the condition of Babylonian learning—a mixture, as we have seen, of tolerably exact science with gross superstition—seems to warrant the supposition of a secular as well as a hierarchical brain at work in the problem. The language of contemporaneous Western writers also, notably the expressions of the prophet Daniel, indicate quite clearly the existence of several classes of wise men in Nebuchadnezzar's capital. Some are called simply Chaldeans; some, soothsayers; some, magicians; some, astrologers. Nor does the language indicate that these are merely different names for the same group of persons. It could not even be inferred from the recital of Daniel that any of the classes referred to were priests. Indeed, it would seem clear from the presidency of Daniel (himself a Hebrew and not a priest) over the Babylonian college that a powerful non-priestly element existed in the learned body of the city. In all such questions, however, it should be always borne in mind that the office of the priest in most of the nations of antiquity was that of a *natural philosopher*, rather than of a spiritual guide. He was expected to interpret the phenomena



of nature, for with those phenomena the ancients were much more concerned than with the mysteries of spiritual being or the possibilities of immortality.

However these questions may be decided, there is no doubt that the philosophers and priests of the Babylonian Empire exercised great influence in the affairs of the state. They held high office. They were the king's advisers. They conducted the ceremonials of religion. They were reputed to have the confidence of the gods. By degrees the priests became a caste. They had their own rules and discipline. Their sons were brought up to perform the duties of their fathers. Around this organization grew a certain body of literature, in which were recorded the traditions of the past and the speculations of the present. The history of the ancient Chaldeans, chronological lists of kings real and mythical, treatises on grammar and law and science—such were the materials of which the Babylonian sages constructed their meager kingdom of letters.

The principal schools and seats of learning in Babylonia were at the old towns of Erech and Borsippa. At these places a certain degree of mental activity and even audacity was developed. There were scholastic schisms and disputatious factions suggestive of Greek wrangling and mediæval dogmatism. But under this superficial agitation, such as will always exist when the human mind undertakes to drag Nature up to the temple of Truth, there was a vast deal of practical scientific knowledge. Mathematics, astronomy, and other branches of natural philosophy were cultivated with such success as to leave a trace on all subsequent history.

As already indicated the two principal pursuits of the Babylonian common folk were agriculture and commerce; after these, manufactures loomed into much importance. Of the kinds of agricultural work and the methods of tillage not much is known beyond what has already been presented in the History of Chaldæa. The products were the same, and the cultivation perhaps identical.

From Babylon the lines of commerce stretched out to nearly all the countries of

the known world. The merchants, resident and traveling, constituted a large per cent of the population. Their energy and success are attested by tradition and history. They were both exporters and importers; and the shops of Babylon displayed an array of goods from almost every land. Not only by land, but by sea as well, was this commerce carried on. Around the shores of the Persian Gulf, and as ambition and cupidity increased along the distant coasts of Africa and India, the ships of the merchant princes of the great city sailed with their cargoes and returned laden. Babylon was called the "City of Merchants," and the Babylonians in the army of Xerxes were known as the "Navigators of Ships."

The leading articles of merchandise were wool, linen, cotton, and the fabrics made therefrom. The precious metals were imported from distant mines. From Phœnicia were brought tin and copper. Gold and ivory were gathered from Arabia; silk, from India. Media contributed wool and several varieties of precious stones. From Upper Mesopotamia were imported—by way of the great rivers—wine and gems, emery and building stone. With these imports came foreign merchants as well as native traders—in the shops of Babylon was heard the jargon of tongues and the noise of them who sell and get gain.

The staple of the Babylonian table was the dried fruit of the date tree: this for the common peasants. Herodotus declares it to have been the *bread* of the people. The dates were gathered when ripe, and were pressed into cakes in the same manner in which they are prepared at the present time. The goat furnished milk and cheese. The sap and pith of the palm yielded, under fermentation, the palm-wine which was served on the table. Of vegetables the chief were cucumbers and melons. Of the oddities of the Babylonian board may be mentioned gourds and *pickled bats*—the latter especially being a dish which could hardly excite the appetite of a modern epicure. The markets of the country always abounded in fish. It constituted one of the chief articles of diet, particularly of those living on the borders of the provincial marshes

of the Empire or along the Gulf. Fishes were taken with hooks and nets, and were cured in the sun. Sometimes a "fish-cake" was produced by pounding and straining the fiber and reducing it to a compact mass, like bread. As already narrated, the tables of the rich were loaded with viands and delicacies.

No people lived more luxuriously, as it respects banqueting and feasting, than did the ancient Babylonians. The supper of princes was a revel, at which voluptuousness and intoxication, heightened with music, were the presiding genii. An orchestra of trained performers sat conspicuous and discoursed mellifluous strains, while the perfumed guests were plied with wine. Indeed, the music of the Babylonians, struck from fine instruments of many sorts and fashions, was a notable feature of social life. Alike in the royal banqueting-halls and in the huts of the peasantry, in the stores and market-houses as well as in the painted palaces and the temples of the gods, sweet strains were heard to inspire the courage or lull the senses of the people.

The position of the women of the Empire was peculiar. It began in abasement and came near ending in honor. When a maiden became marriageable, which she did at an early age, she was subject to be sold by public auction. Her father or brother might thus expose her to the excited passions of rival

bidders. The custom was commonly practiced, and, as it appears, without compunction on the part of either seller or buyer. When the creature was thus sold and delivered over to lawless rapacity, it was with the understanding that she should at some time go of her own accord to the temple of Beltis and deliver herself up to the first stranger whom she met. And this Esplanade of Shame was always thronged with visitors!

These two degrading customs apart, the women of Babylonia fared much better than in most other Eastern countries. There was no harem, properly so called. Women were apparently free from that degrading seclusion which oriental despots have contrived to preserve the purity of the sex! Nor do the annals of the Empire indicate that the wives of the Babylonian kings and princes were worse treated or held in less esteem than were the women of Macedonia or Carthage. From the pictorial sketches found on the cylinders, representing the various vocations and pleasures of the Babylonian women, even among the peasantry, it would not appear that their lot was to be more deplored than that of the men of their age and country. Doubtless, the relations of the sexes then, as always under the present constitution of human nature, were to a certain degree refined by mutual sorrow and hallowed by the blessedness of love.

## CHAPTER XXIV.—RELIGION.



FEW paragraphs will suffice to give an outline of the theology and religious rites of the Babylonians. Their system was so little deflected from that of primitive

Chaldaea that the whole subject might be dismissed with a simple reference to what has been said in the Second Book respecting the religion of the Chaldees. The original gods of the plains of Shinar survived the shock of the Assyrian conquest, and revived without a

change of name or feature amid the splendors of the Later Empire. Nebuchadnezzar might have walked to the temple arm in arm with the shade of Kudur-Lagamer, and the twain would have found no cause of controversy! True, some subtle distinctions had arisen with which the elder was unfamiliar in his day, but they were not such as to disturb his faith or shock his orthodoxy.

The few changes which occurred in the religious development of the Chaldaean into the Babylonian system had respect to such points as the relative rank of different deities, and



to such non-essentials as the matter of names and epithets. In several instances, the higher god of the Chaldeans becomes the lower of the Babylonians, and *vice versa*. Thus Merodach, who was inferior to Bel in the primitive pantheon, was made his superior by the priests of Nebuchadnezzar. Nabonadius, however, resented the degradation of Bel and restored him to his supremacy. In like manner, there was a confusion and even blending of the names and offices of Beltis and Ishtar, who are sometimes spoken of as one and the same divinity.

The three great gods of the Babylonian system were Bel, Merodach, and Nebo. After these was Nergal, who had the principal seat of his worship at Cutha. Bel and Merodach were the supreme deities of Babylon. Here once a year, in the magnificent temple of the former god, a great festival was celebrated. A splendid procession was formed in his honor, and on the broad altar in front of his shrine a thousand talents of frankincense were burned. Nebo was the tutelary deity of Borsippa. His worship was especially popular, and his name was incorporated in the names of a majority of the Babylonian kings. The great monarchs,



IMAGE OF BEELZEBUB, THE FLY GOD.

*Nabo-polassar*, *Nebu-chadnezzar*, and *Nabonadius*, were so-called after their patron god. The names of Nergal and Bel occur in like manner, but less frequently. The worship of the Moon as the deity of Borsippa, and the

Sun at Sippara, has already been described in the Book on Chaldea.

In all the Babylonian temples were images of the gods. It does not appear, however, that the worship conducted before these images was downright idolatry. The theory of the priests was—as it has ever been—that the mind of the worshiper was fixed upon the deity by means of the symbol. To many of the ignorant masses, however, the idol was doubtless the god, and the god the idol. An intermediate class believed that the deity came down at certain times, and ate and drank the offerings which were left before his image.



IMAGE OF ASHTAROTH.

The making of idols was a regular trade in the city. The god-smith was in good repute. The materials used in the fabrication of images were gold, silver, bronze, and stone—according to the costliness of the temple and shrine wherein the statues were to be placed. Some of the idols were cast solid; others were of the base metals, or even of clay, overlaid or plated with gold or silver.

Each one of the Babylonian temples had its retinue of priests. To them the management of the shrines and images and the conduct of worship were intrusted. These hierarchs lived either in the temple itself or in adjacent houses assigned to their use. They married and reared families just as the members of other professions, and their places in the priestly office were taken by their sons. In many cases, however, the sacred college was recruited from the ranks of the laity, nor was any marked discrimination made even against foreigners. In the conduct of the ceremonies of their religion the priests were formal and dignified. Their dresses were rich to the last degree, and the public services were pompous and magnificent. The altars were hidden under clouds of frankincense; costly offerings were laid on the shrine; victims bled to satisfy the hunger of the gods. The great occasions

of religious solemnity were holidays in the city. Processions were formed and banquets spread in honor of such days. Wine flowed freely. Priests and people alike gave way to the revel. The gods were said to rejoice and drink with their worshipers, and all the excesses of the festival were shared in common by men and deities.<sup>1</sup> During such seasons of religious abandonment the esplanade before the temple of Beltis was more than usually thronged with women and strangers to fulfill the degrading injunctions of that goddess and her priests.

As among the Egyptians and the Jews, certain requirements were made of the Babylonians respecting personal cleanliness. Ablutions and the burning of incense were the means employed to purify those who were defiled. The newly-married were unclean, and were obliged to sit for a season before a burning censer. The touch of a dead body, and many other acts analogous to those interdicted by the Egyptian priests and by Moses, rendered the person unclean; and whatever thing the unclean touched was in like manner defiled. After the prescribed formula of purification the unclean were restored to purity and returned to the ordinary duties of life.

The Babylonian priests were mystics. They delighted in the substitution of the symbol for the thing. They assigned to their deities, and to many other facts of their religion, sacred numbers and signs by which the divine things were known in conversation and writing. Thus the god Anu was numbered 60; Bel, 50; and Hea, 40. The Moon was 30; the Sun, 20; and Vul, 10. Beltis was 15, and Nergal 12. Besides these numbers, which were usually employed instead of the sacred names for which they stood, many other signs

and symbols were used in the same mystical manner. The surfaces of the cylinders are in some instances almost covered with these signs, the same being placed here and there in all the vacant spaces of the regular inscription. Among such signs may be mentioned the circle crossed with transverse diameters, which was the symbol of Shamas, god of the Sun; also the six-rayed star, which was the emblem of Anunit. Vul, the air-god, was represented by a triple thunderbolt, and Hea by a serpent. Ishtar was symbolized by the female form, and Bar by a fish. Besides those signs, the meanings of which have been determined, many more are found, the significance of which has not yet been determined—and may never be. Prominent among these uninterpreted symbols are the double cross, the jar, the altar, the lozenge, and many kinds of beasts and birds. To these may be added the double horn, the sacred tree, and the spearhead, all of which are many times repeated on the cylinders. It is safe to infer that all these signs had reference to the theological notions and religious ceremonies of the Babylonians, that they were understood by the priests and perhaps by the people, and that the final purpose of such symbolization was to prevent the most sacred ideas and words of religion from becoming too common by repetition on the lips of the vulgar.

Most of the great temples of Babylonia had symbolic names, the meanings of which have not been determined. Such names are nearly always preceded by the syllable *bit*, and this part is evidently identical with the Hebrew word *beth*, meaning a "house." Thus the names of some of the most noted temples were Bit-Saggath, Bit-Ana, Bit-Parra, Bit-Ulmis, Bit-Tsida, etc.; but the meanings of these primitive words, *Saggath*, *Parra*, *Ulmis*, etc., are unknown. The sense and the symbol have sunk together into that oblivious dust from which there is no resurrection.

<sup>1</sup> It was on occasions of this sort that the priestess of the temple had the splendid gold-embroidered couch of the inner shrine prepared for herself and for the god who was said to visit her.



## CHAPTER XXV.—CIVIL AND MILITARY ANNALS.



ABYLON was ruled by seven kings. Of these the great names are Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, and Nabonadius. The history of the Empire begins with the accession

of the first named, in the year B. C. 625. Babylonia, however, as a province or viceroyalty of Assyria, had had an existence extending over several centuries. The Assyrian conquest had never extinguished the southern kingdom, but merely reduced it to a position of subordination. There was thus interposed between the time of the capture of Babylon by the Assyrians, in B. C. 1300, with the consequent transfer of the leadership of the Mesopotamian nations to Nineveh, and the sudden revival of Babylonian independence under Nabopolassar, a long and dubious period in the history of the ancient kingdom of the South—a period in which the political status of Babylonia fluctuated between absolute subjection and *quasi* independence. It is in this chaotic time, between the extinction of the Chaldean monarchy and the restitution under Nabopolassar, that the beginnings of Babylonian history must be sought and found.

Very soon after the conquest of the country by Tiglath-Adar, in B. C. 1300, it was found desirable to govern Babylonia as a viceroyalty rather than as an integral part of the Assyrian Empire. In order to prevent revolts and to insure the loyalty of the provincial government, the Ninevite kings were careful for a long time to select, as their viceroys in the South, princes and nobles of Assyrian blood. With this precaution, the province was left in a state of comparative independence, subject only to the regular payment of the tribute. It was but natural, however, that these Babylonian governors, so far removed from Nineveh, should frequently look askance at the doings of the home government, and that they should see in the situ-

ation the suggestion of independence. Even under a certain NEBUCHADNEZZAR, the first Babylonian viceroy, there were two outbreaks on the part of the governor. He made considerable headway against the forces of Asshur-Ris-Ilim, the then Assyrian king, and though defeated and driven back, he retired into his government without serious punishment.

When Asshur-Ris-Ilim was succeeded by his son, Tiglath-Pileser I., the latter determined to avenge the insult offered to his country and led an army into Babylonia. Merodach-Iddin-Akhi had now become viceroy, and between him and the Assyrian there was a struggle for the mastery. The Babylonians were beaten. Several of their cities were taken, including the two Sipparas, Opis, and Babylon; but there was still vigor enough left in the army of the viceroy to pursue and harass the king as he retired from the country. It is said, even, that Merodach in one instance made a dash on the rear of the Assyrian army, and succeeded in capturing and carrying away the images of the gods, which Pileser had brought along to protect him. These disturbances continued during the two succeeding reigns, and it was not until the close of the first century after the conquest that a state of comparative quiet was attained.

This more peaceful condition was brought about rather by the weakening of Assyrian influence than by any stupor among the Babylonians. For about two hundred years (B. C. 1100–900), the power which had been so signally established by Tiglath-Adar was allowed to decline in the hands of incompetent successors. Meanwhile the Babylonians, recovering from the depression of conquest, flourished and extended their influence, political and commercial, into several surrounding countries. But, with the accession, in the year B. C. 880, of Asshur-Izir-Pal, a new energy was diffused in Assyrian affairs. This monarch marched an army into Babylonia, and recovered all those territories over which

the viceroys had in the interim extended their authority.

In the year 850 B. C. a civil broil arose in Babylonia, and the distraction thus entailed gave an easy opportunity to the son of Asshur-Izir-Pal still further to humble the ambitions of the Babylonians. He had the prudence to espouse the cause of the legitimate viceroy, who was opposed by a younger brother. The Assyrian king was admitted to Babylon. The younger brother was slain, and the rightful governor restored to his authority. But the Assyrian, having thus become strong by acting as arbiter in a civil war, proceeded to make himself more completely than ever master of the whole of Lower Mesopotamia. Those districts which had been dependent upon Babylonia were made to feel that a mightier than Babylonia had come. Their petty kings were displaced. Assyrians were put in their stead, and tribute exacted from all the provinces of the South. The relation of the viceroyalty to the Ninevite power was no longer ambiguous.

Nine years later the country was again—and this time wantonly—invaded by the Assyrians. The object seems to have been mere spoliation. The viceroy met his antagonist in the field, and was twice disastrously defeated. He was obliged to make an absolute submission. Babylon fell to the rank of a provincial city, subject to a heavy tribute. For more than fifty years this state of miserable subjection continued. Not until the disturbed reign of Asshur-Dayān III., B. C. 770, did a revival take place in the fortunes of Babylonia. PUL was now the provincial governor. Taking advantage of the troubles in Assyria, he organized an army, overran Lower Mesopotamia, made a successful campaign into the upper valley of the Euphrates, and carried his victorious arms without serious opposition into Syria and even Palestine. These bold movements on the part of Pul cleared the ground for the still more marked successes which were to follow.

In 747 B. C. NABONASSAR became ruler of Babylonia. He is generally regarded as the first *king* of the Later Empire. Certain it is that by him Babylonian independence was for a time reestablished. The ambition of this

monarch, however, seems to have extended no further than Babylonia Proper. The other dependent provinces of the South were left to go their ways. Several of them succeeded for a season in throwing off the yoke and reaching up towards sovereignty. Thus did Yakin, chief of one of the coast provinces. Thus also did Nadina and Zakiru, two other local rulers in the northern part of Lower Mesopotamia. Babylonia under Nabonassar was thus restricted to her narrowest limits. Nevertheless, the kingdom was so completely established as to constitute the beginning of a new era, from which are dated the subsequent events in the history of the Empire.<sup>1</sup>

It does not appear that the rather easy-going Tiglath-Pileser II., king of Assyria, was much disturbed by Nabonassar's assumption of sovereignty. In the early part of his reign he made an invasion of Chaldæa, but his object seems to have been merely to humble Merodach-Baladan—son and successor of Yakin, mentioned above—who was trying to maintain local independence. Pileser does not seem to have troubled himself with the more important work of humbling Nabonassar, who was, perhaps, too large game for the king's quiver. All of this inured greatly to the benefit of the Babylonian, who witnessed with delight the subjugation of the petty, rebellious princes of his own neighborhood by the Assyrians. It saved himself the trouble of making war upon the insurrectionists within his own borders. That which humbled them gave him strength. The broken-down provinces of the South naturally looked to him as a leader and protector, since he only seemed able to stand without alarm in the presence of the majesty of Assyria.

The reign of Nabonassar extended from B. C. 747 to B. C. 733. With him, according to Herodotus and other ancient writers, was associated his mother, SEMIRAMIS. Attempts have been made to show that she and the Assyrian Semiramis were one and the same per-

<sup>1</sup> It should not be forgotten in this connection that Nabonassar took care to have destroyed the records of his predecessor in order to make sure his own place in history as the founder of a dynasty.



sonage. If we are to trust the accepted chronologies, the Assyrian queen flourished a full half century before the date assigned to the Babylonian. Possibly there were two princesses of the same name. Possibly a mistake has been made in the dates. At any rate it appears that the queen-mother—or queen-wife, as some say—of Nabonassar exercised a large influence during his reign, and added to the traditional glory of the name of Semiramis.

Nabonassar conducted no important wars, and added nothing by conquest to his dominions. After a reign of fourteen years he was succeeded by an obscure prince, called *NADIUS*. He is not reckoned among the “kings,” and his two successors, *CHINZINUS* and *PORUS*, were still less worthy to be counted among the great rulers of Babylon. The next was named *ELULACUS*, who is rather a mythical than a historical personage. *Nadius* is said to have reigned for two years, and the others followed in quick succession. None of the four left any distinct impress on the history of their times, nor do they seem to have been honored even in their own country. With the accession of *MERODACH-BALADAN*, however, another era of prosperity and power dawned in Babylonia.

This ambitious prince had been the ruler of a province in the times of Nabonassar, and in the vicissitudes that followed that monarch's death gained such influence as to make himself the successor of *Elulacus*. He had, after his father's death, been obliged by *Tiglath-Pileser* to acknowledge himself tributary to Assyria; but this was done with a mental reservation, and after remaining for a while in obscurity, he suddenly availed himself of a change of dynasties in both Assyria and Babylonia to extend his authority over the latter country. This was accomplished in the year 721 B. C., coincidently with the accession of Sargon to the throne of Nineveh.

It was a precarious assumption of power. *Merodach-Baladan* seemed to realize the peril of his situation. Sargon, the new monarch of Assyria, was not a ruler to be trifled with. The Babylonian saw that he must fight. For some time the affairs at Nineveh were in such a condition as to favor *Merodach's* usurpation.

A period of twelve years intervened before Sargon was ready to turn his attention to affairs in Babylonia. This interval had been well employed by the king of that country in preparations for the conflict. He had succeeded in building up a formidable league to resist the further encroachments of Assyrian ambition. He established friendly relations with *Hezekiah*, king of Judah. *Sabak*, the Egyptian Pharaoh, also entered into the plans of *Merodach*, and thus an alliance was effected between Babylonia and Susiana in the East and Egypt and Palestine in the West. The array thus presented to Sargon was not to be despised.

The geographical position of the parties, however, greatly favored the Assyrians. Nineveh was so situated with respect to Babylonia and Syria as to enable Sargon to divide the parties to the league. He could easily thrust his armies between those of his antagonists and beat them in detail. He accordingly organized two campaigns, one against Egypt and one against Babylon. The allies were unable to withstand him. In B. C. 711 he made his way into Egypt. The stronghold of *Ashdod* was taken without much resistance, and Pharaoh *Sabak* made haste to send an embassy suing for peace. Egyptian dependency was reestablished, and Sargon turned his attention to the reduction of Babylonia.

In the next year he marched into Lower Mesopotamia. A decisive battle was fought, and *Merodach-Baladan* was completely overthrown. He retreated into his native province, and shut himself in the fortress of *Yakin*; but Sargon pursued him, took the city, got possession of the Babylonian himself, and carried him off to Nineveh. Before leaving the South, Sargon had himself proclaimed king of Babylon, thus, for the time, extinguishing the line of native rulers.

The Assyrian monarch, however, did not long live to enjoy his double throne. Upon his death, in the year B. C. 704, insurrections immediately broke out in Babylonia, and several aspirants claimed the crown. A son of Sargon attempted to uphold his father's claims, but was unable to do so. A prince named *HAGISA* secured the throne, but was driven

away after a month's occupancy. Meanwhile, Merodach-Baladan, after a captivity of several years, succeeded in escaping from Nineveh, and reappeared where he was most needed. He killed Hagisa, and again seized the throne.

His ascendancy was for a short time maintained, but Sennacherib, who had now succeeded Sargon as king of Assyria, marched against him, overthrew him in battle, and drove him into exile. The Assyrian then reestablished the authority which had been exercised by his father in Babylonia, and for the next seventy-five years the status of the country as a dependency of Assyria was not seriously disturbed. Sometimes the kings of Nineveh controlled affairs in the South without subordinate governors, and at other times viceroys were appointed after the manner which had prevailed before the accession of Pul. During the reigns of Esarhaddon and Asshur-Bani-Pal, of Assyria, several revolts occurred, but they were of little importance, and were easily subdued. In no case did these civil troubles continue for more than a year.—Such is a brief sketch of the Babylonian kingdom from the conquest by Tiglath-Adar down to the time of the revolt of Nabopolassar.

The circumstances leading to this important event have already been reviewed in connection with the overthrow of Assyria by the Medes. Two generations had now passed, and the Babylonians had become comparatively contented under the dominion of the Ninevite rule. Perhaps they had come in some measure to regard themselves as an integral part of the Assyrian Empire. At any rate, when the first symptoms of the Median invasion appeared, they were not shaken from the allegiance to which they had now grown accustomed. In the first disastrous expedition of Cyaxares against Nineveh, the Babylonians took no part. During the whole time of the Scythic invasions, when the attention of the Empire was absorbed with the movements of that barbaric horde, the southern viceroys made no effort to assert their independence.

Meanwhile the baffled but not broken ambition of Cyaxares was busily at work. His emissaries were in Babylonia, sowing the

seeds of insurrection. The nobles and princes of the country were taught to expect the not improbable collapse of Assyria under the assaults of the Mede. Such was the discontent thus created that when the rumor of a second advance by Cyaxares through the passes of the Zagros reached Nineveh, the news also came that the Babylonians had revolted, and were marching from the south to coöperate in the invasion. Under this double peril the forces of Assyria were divided. Saracus remained at the head of his principal army to confront the Medes, and Nabopolassar, a trusted Assyrian general, was put in command of a large division with orders to march into Babylonia, restore order in the kingdom, and defend the southern border against aggression.

It appears that Nabopolassar was not seriously resisted in his mission. Either by force or counsel he conciliated the Babylonians to the extent of gaining admission to the capital, where he was quietly installed as viceroy of the kingdom. Here, however, he soon saw his own opportunity. The agents of Cyaxares were ready to foster and stimulate a treason, which the circumstances had already suggested. Nabopolassar fell from his loyalty and entered into willing negotiations with the Mede. It was arranged that the viceroy should betray his king and join in the coming invasion of Assyria. Babylonia, as the price of this treachery, was to be made independent. Nabopolassar was to be the king. His son Nebuchadnezzar should have for his queen Amyitis, the daughter of Cyaxares: and all was accomplished as it was contrived.

As soon as it was known in Babylon that the king of the Medes was on the march, Nabopolassar set out from the capital with an army. While he made his way northward his ally came from the east. The overthrow of Saracus and the siege and capture of Nineveh followed. The Assyrian Empire was broken up, and each of the confederates took his allotted portion. Assyria Proper fell to the Medes, and Nabopolassar received the kingdom of Babylon, to which were annexed Susiana on the east, and the valley of the Euphrates and the whole of Syria on the



west. To these subject countries the transfer of masters was no great hardship, nor was the conduct and usurpations of Nabopolassar in any quarter seriously resented. Such were the circumstances of the founding of what may be properly called the Empire of the Babylonians.

The great revolution occurred in the year 625 B. C. NABOPOLASSAR entered upon a peaceful reign of twenty-one years. His government was not seriously disturbed by revolts or by foreign invasion. He seems to have had that wisdom of peace which permits the fruits of revolution to ripen into institutions. The reigns of such rulers are generally called uneventful, but if the histories of countries were written by peasants, a different story would be told—a story of prosperity in commercial marts and of quiet under roofs of thatch.

The foreign relations of Babylonia were peculiarly auspicious. Assyria on the north was disrupted. Media on the east was bound by a marriage tie and a treaty of amity. Persia had not yet become formidable, and Lydia was far away. Egypt, now under the rule of Pharaoh Psametik, had assumed a conservative policy quite necessary to her own salvation. So Babylon, basking in the sunshine of good fortune, began to wax great and to exhibit that splendor of proportions and adornment for which she was soon to become famous throughout the world.

A single circumstance contributed to maintain the military ardor of the Babylonians. By the terms of the alliance between Cyaxares and Nabopolassar, the latter was to assist the former in the prosecution of his wars. From this clause in the agreement it frequently happened that the Babylonian king had to lead an army into the field to aid in the campaigns of his ally. In those wars in which the Medes were obliged to engage after the capture of Nineveh, in order to maintain and establish by force what had been won by battle, contingents of Babylonian troops were always auxiliary, and not infrequently Nabopolassar himself and, after him, his successors were present in person in the field. It will be remembered that when the armies of Cyax-

ares and Alyattes were contending in the great Battle of the Eclipse, it was Nabopolassar who acted on the part of the Medes in settling the conditions of peace.<sup>1</sup> It is easy to conceive that the Babylonian was more zealous in his efforts for reconciliation than if he himself had been one of the principals in the contest. Albeit, he may have known better than the other kings on that memorable field that an eclipse is simply a natural occurrence in no wise indicative of the wrath of the celestials.

After the peace thus established between the Medes and the Lydians, Nabopolassar returned to his own capital. He was no longer either young or warlike. It was the fate of his old age, and of the close of his reign, to be clouded with disaster. A cloud arose out of Egypt which cast a shadow over him and his empire. The Pharaoh Psametik was now dead, and his successor, Necho, was a ruler less politic and more ambitious. He regarded the Babylonian dominion in Syria as a usurpation, which he determined to resent and punish. Accordingly he raised an army and began an invasion, with a view to reestablish Egyptian supremacy in that country. He proceeded through the plain of Esdrâlon, as far as the city of MEGIDDO, where he met Josiah, king of Judah, with an army drawn up to oppose his progress. Josiah was at this time tributary to Nabopolassar, and from some cause had come to prefer a Babylonian to an Egyptian master. He therefore stood loyally in the way of Necho, who first tried strategy and then force to remove the obstacle. The battle went against the Jewish king, who was driven, mortally wounded, into Jerusalem, where he died. Necho then proceeded with the invasion of Syria, and carried his triumphant arms to the very banks of the Euphrates.

The authority of Egypt was thus restored over the whole western portion of the dominions which, out of the spoils of Assyria, had fallen to Nabopolassar. On his return from this successful campaign, Necho interfered in the civil war which was going on between the two sons of Josiah, both of whom claimed the crown of Judah. The Egyptian decided in

<sup>1</sup> See page 229.

favor of Jehoiakim, Jehoahaz, the younger brother, being deposed as a usurper. Before reaching his own country, Necho fell upon the strong fortress of Gaza, next to Ashdod, the principal town of Philistia, and carried it after a siege.

Nabopolassar was now (B. C. 605) in the last year of his life. Alarmed by the loss of Syria, he determined to recover what Necho had taken from him. After the army was raised and equipped, however, the aged king found himself unable to conduct the expedition, and so the command was given to his son, Nebuchadnezzar. This prince had already had considerable experience in war, and had shown tokens of the distinguished career which awaited him. He pushed boldly into Upper Syria, where at Carchemish the Egyptians had established themselves in full force to hold the country. Here they were attacked by the Babylonian army and were completely routed. Every vestige of Egyptian resistance melted away.

Nebuchadnezzar proceeded to the West, meeting no further opposition. He paused for a short time in Palestine, where he received the submission of Jehoiakim, whom Necho had set up, and then continued his triumphant course to the gateway of Egypt. Doubtless the Pharaoh would have paid dearly for his recent ambitions but for the news which here reached Nebuchadnezzar of his father's death. Without delay, the king, fearing that some rival might usurp the throne of Babylon, gave orders for his army to retrace its course into Upper Syria, and himself, with a detachment, made all speed by the nearest route across the desert to the capital.

In Babylon, however, every thing was quiet. After the death of Nabopolassar, the priests, loyal to the son, had assumed the conduct of affairs until the prince might return from the borders of Egypt. He had a triumphant reception, and was peacefully established on the throne of the Empire. His accession, in B. C. 604, marks the era of Babylonian greatness. Whether we regard the vigor and success of his wars, or the glory of his capital, or his prestige as a civil ruler, his reign must be considered one of the most

illustrious of ancient history. It was at this time that the great palaces and temples arose, that the Walls were built, that the Hanging Gardens were reared for the Median wife of the king. It is hardly too much to say that the chief renown of the Babylonians as a nation is referable in a large degree to the personal energy and kingcraft and warcraft of Nebuchadnezzar.

To Josephus and other Jewish historians we are indebted for the best accounts of the wars of this period. The contemporaneous records of Babylonia furnish but scanty and imperfect materials from which to gather any extended account of the military movements of the time. It is to be assumed that most of the campaigns of Nebuchadnezzar were carried on to the West—into Syria, Palestine, Phœnicia, Egypt. It was from this direction that he was provoked in his boyhood, and the restless peoples spreading out towards Syria and the Mediterranean were in a state of turbulence most likely to continue the provocation. On the side of the Medes and Persians not much trouble was to be anticipated. His wife was a sister of Astyages, and Cyrus had not yet appeared on the stage. These circumstances gave peace on one side of the Empire, and on the other war. The Jewish historians had good reason to recount the inroads and devastations wrought by the great king's armies.

For the first six years the reign of Nebuchadnezzar was but little disturbed. The first important insurrection was the revolt of Tyre, the chief city of the Phœnicians. About the same time, Jehoiakim, king of Judah—doubtless calling to mind the fact that he owed his own sovereignty to Pharaoh Necho, the rival of the king of Babylon, and believing that the Egyptians would come to his aid—revolted and took up arms. It was to punish these Phœnician and Jewish rebels that Nebuchadnezzar undertook the first great campaign after his accession. He invested Tyre, but that strong city proved for a long time impregnable. So the king, without desisting from the siege, divided his forces, and with one division proceeded against Jerusalem. To the last moment Jehoiakim relied upon the



Egyptians to come to his aid, but the Pharaoh held aloof, and his self-constituted ally was left to his fate. He made his submission to Nebuchadnezzar, who deliberately put him to death, and he was "buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem." For the time being, the Babylonian king conferred the crown of Judah upon Jehoiakin, son of the recent ruler; but he soon fell under suspicion of treachery, was deposed, and taken a captive to Babylon, thus making way for Zedekiah, who was put upon the Jewish throne.

Meanwhile, the siege of Tyre continued. The island city seemed invincible before the clumsy methods of the Babylonians, but the latter hung to the task with vindictive energy. Year after year went by, and the city must soon have fallen but for a second revolt on the part of the Jews. For some reason these people had come to prefer Egyptian to Babylonian masters. Perhaps they even hoped ultimately to throw off all mastery and become independent, as in the days of David. At any rate, Zedekiah, after having kept his faith with Nebuchadnezzar for eight years, became at heart disloyal, and entered into an intrigue with Egypt against the Babylonians.

Pharaoh Apries was now the Egyptian ruler, a youth whose ambition overleaped his prudence. He and Zedekiah took counsel together against the mighty, and it was agreed that the Jewish king should revolt and that the Egyptian should come to his support. Accordingly, in B. C. 588, Zedekiah threw off his allegiance and gathered an army for defense. This was the *fourth* insurrection which had occurred since Palestine became a Babylonian dependency. Nebuchadnezzar was enraged. He marched with his host against the city of the Jews, desolating the country as he came. Jerusalem was at once invested. Mounds were built against the walls, and the place was already reduced to straits when Apries came up from Egypt to succor his friend. Nebuchadnezzar, for the time, gave up the siege, turned upon the Egyptians, whom he routed in battle and drove precipitately into their own country. Zedekiah was thus left to his fate. The investment of the

city was renewed, and after eighteen months Jerusalem fell. Zedekiah attempted to escape with a remnant of his troops, but was captured near Jericho. His sons were slaughtered before his face; his eyes were put out, and he was sent in chains to Babylon. The state of Judah was extinguished, and the seventy years' captivity of the Jews began. Gedaliah was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar to rule over the ruins of Palestine, among which Jeremiah sat weeping.

It is appropriate in this connection to recount in a few paragraphs the history of the people of Israel. Their career as a tribe from the days of Abraham to the time of the Exodus has already been sketched in the First Book.<sup>1</sup> After their escape from the Egyptians, the crossing of the Gulf of Suez, and a conflict with the Amalekites, MOSES led the people to Sinai, where the Law was given and the Jewish economy instituted. The Levites were set apart to have exclusive jurisdiction over the national worship. In his progress from Sinai to Canaan—a desert march from station to station through a period of forty years—Moses avoided the lands of the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites, but proceeded boldly against Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan. Both of these chieftains lived east of the Jordan. They were dispossessed of their lands, which were bestowed on the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh. Moses died on Mount Nebo, and was succeeded in authority by JOSHUA, of the tribe of Ephraim.

He proved himself to be an able and resolute general. He led the tribes of Israel across the Jordan into Canaan, or the Holy Land, and there began a war of extermination upon the native inhabitants. A predatory life of forty years in the desert had converted the brick-makers of Egypt into a hardy soldiery, and the Canaanites were driven back before them. All were exterminated except the Gibeonites, who secured their safety by a stratagem, and became a dependent or servile class among the Hebrews. The other Canaanitish kings were enraged at this immunity of the Gibeonites, and assembled in the

<sup>1</sup> See Book First, pp. 64-66.

north with the remnants of the native tribes to punish those who had made an alliance with the invader. Jabin, the so-called "king" of Canaan, was leader of the confederacy against which Joshua mustered his forces at Beth-horon. Decisive battles were fought at this place, and shortly afterwards at Merom, in both of which Joshua completely overthrew and dispersed his enemies. The country of Palestine was peaceably divided among the remaining ten and a half tribes of Israel.<sup>1</sup> The tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh had already received



HIGH PRIEST OF ISRAEL.

their chosen portion east of the Jordan. The first period of Jewish history extends from the time of the conquest of Canaan, B. C. 1350, to the establishment of the monarchy under Saul, B. C. 1095. The government of Israel during this period was a theocracy. Moses had been a law-giver and leader.

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that the twelve sons of Jacob became the progenitors of the *thirteen* tribes of Israel. The two sons of Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh—inherited equally with their uncles. When the tribe of Levi was set apart for the service of the sanctuary, the number of tribes inheriting lands (for the Levites had none) was again reduced to twelve.

After him Joshua, the general, gave the people peace by war. After him a series of rulers arose known as Judges; for they "judged Israel." Many of these were persons of distinguished merit either in wisdom or war. Such were Deborah and Samson and Gideon, who—the first by exaltation of character, the second by strength, and the third by military prowess—conducted the government with energy and success. Sometimes for an interval there was no judge at all. In such interregna every man was at liberty to do what seemed good in his own eyes.

By and by the example of the surrounding nations produced the infection of monarchy in Israel. The people clamored for a king. The uncertain judgeship proved only an equivocal defense against the strong, personal governments of the adjacent pagan nations. Under the popular impulse, and against the theocratic principle, SAUL, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, was chosen for the royal honor, and was anointed by the prophet Samuel. With this event the second period of Israelitish history begins.

Saul was a warrior. He was an austere and able man, cordially disliked by the priesthood, between whom and himself there was a conflict of authority. He began his reign by making war on the Ammonites, whom he quickly reduced to subjection. He then fell upon the Philistines, whom he routed with great slaughter in the decisive battle of Michmash. Then the Moabites, Amalekites, and Edomites were successively driven beyond the borders of Israel. Meanwhile, however, an anti-Saul party had arisen among the people. The intractable spirit of the king had given the priests opportunity to incite discontent and to direct popular attention to young DAVID, the son of Jesse, as the coming ruler of Israel. There were dissensions in the house of Saul. The jealousy of the king was aroused against David, and Jonathan, the king's son, espoused the cause of the young aspirant to the extent of becoming his protector. By and by, in a battle with the Philistines, led by Achish, king of Gath, Saul and all but one of his sons were killed. Ishbosheth survived, and was for a brief period rec-





BATTLE OF MICHMASH.



ognized as king of Israel. David, however, was also crowned at Hebron, and only awaited Ishbosheth's death to become king of the whole nation.

One of the first acts of his reign was the conquest of Jerusalem, the principal town of the Jebusites, which place he made the future capital of Israel and the holy city of his race

remnants of the old pagan nations around the borders of Palestine were reduced to absolute subjection. The king conquered a peace, and rested on his laurels.

At this epoch a national literature made its appearance. David himself was a poet and a patron of song. He is the reputed author of many of the Psalms composed during his



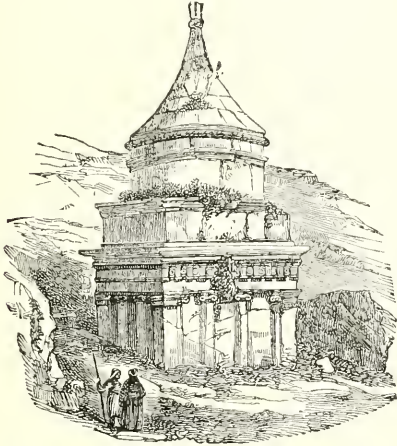
SAUL ANOINTED BY SAMUEL.

in all time to come. The Ark of the Covenant, set up a long time ago in the desert, was now transferred from Kirjathjearim to Jerusalem, and this fact fixed the religious thought of the people on the new capital. David then entered upon his wars, which were successful to the extent that the primacy of Israel was for a season extended from the Red Sea to the banks of the Euphrates. All the

reign, which have ever since remained a central element in the religious worship of both Jewish and Christian peoples. Less creditable to the king were the social abuses which began in his time, and in some measure under his countenance. Polygamy was introduced and abetted by the king's example, and his personal conduct in many respects has subjected him to the censure of after ages. Growing



out of the jealousies attendant upon his multiple marriages, his sons, Absalom and Adonijah, revolted against their father's authority, and the former of the two was proclaimed king. The armies of Israel were sent against them; Absalom was killed, and Adonijah was sentenced and executed after the death of the king.



ABSALOM'S TOMB.

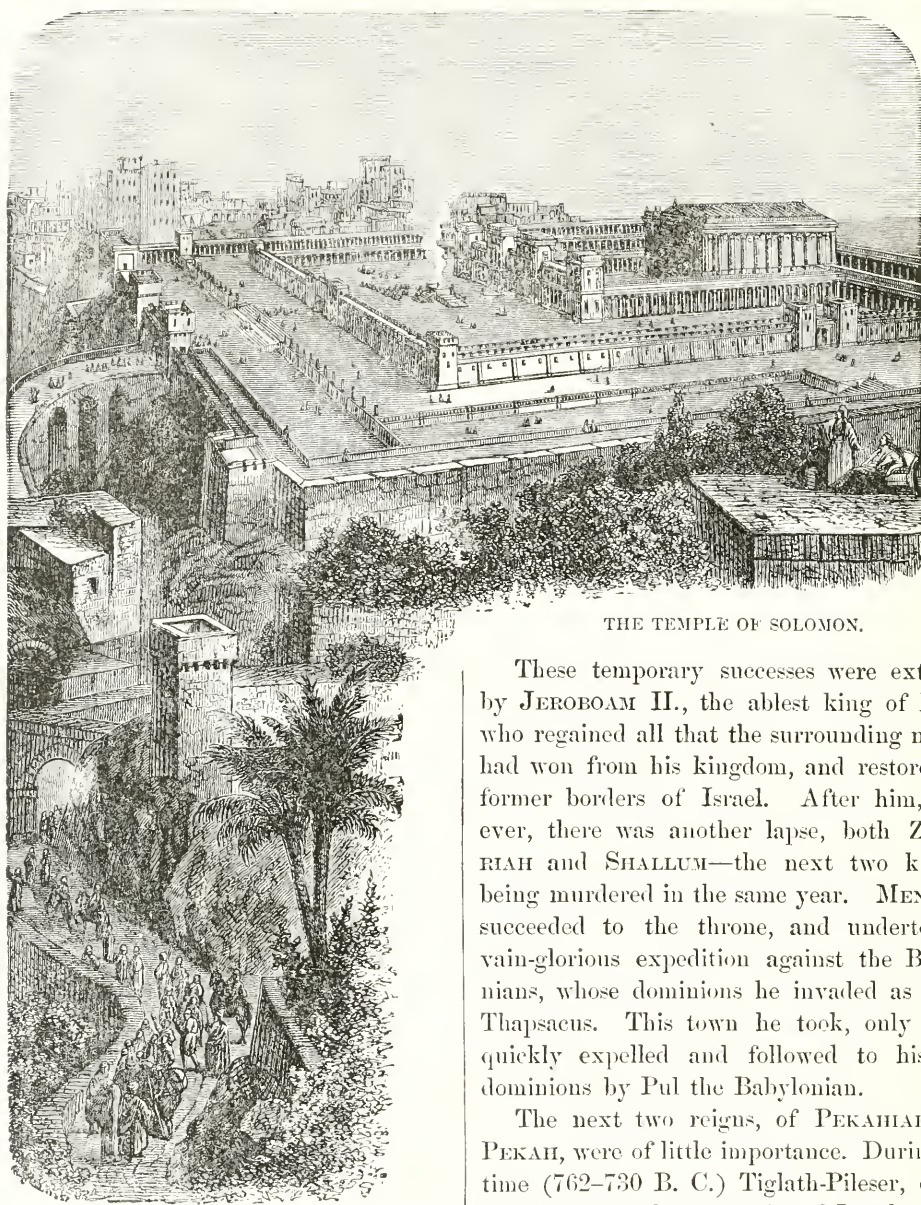
David was succeeded by his son SOLOMON, whose chief glory is the building of the temple at Jerusalem. He was perhaps the most cultured and certainly the most splendid king of his times. The fame of his court extended into all the surrounding nations. Luxury was given full sway. The government was transformed into a sultanate, in which all the vices of the East flourished. The splendors of the gorgeous temple erected on Mount Moriah shone with a strange luster into the royal palace and harem of the abandoned king. His old age was distracted with domestic troubles, and his death was clouded with the shadows of imminent revolt and dissolution.

No sooner was Solomon dead than REHOBOAM, his son and successor, adopted his father's methods as his own. He assumed towards the discontented people, long oppressed by heavy burdens of taxation, a haughty air well calculated to fire the rebellious spirit. JEROBOAM, the Ephraimite, appeared as a popular leader. Ten of the tribes revolted and went over to his banner. The remaining two tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained under Rehoboam, who henceforth took the title of king of JUDAH, the ten tribes under Jeroboam

constituting the kingdom of ISRAEL. Thus, in B. C. 975, was effected the division of the Hebrew nation into two peoples, who ever afterwards maintained towards each other an attitude of estrangement and hostility.

Jerusalem remained the capital of Judah, but the borders of Israel came within ten miles of the city. The capital of the latter kingdom was fixed first at Shechem, then at Tirzah, and finally at Samaria. Jeroboam began his reign with a series of measures best calculated to win the people away from any remaining compunctions as it respected allegiance to the House of David, now represented by Rehoboam. At Bethel and Dan new sanctuaries were set up, and the god Apis, cast of gold, was substituted for the ark and the altar of the temple. A new priesthood was instituted, and not a few Levites went over from Judah to Israel. The people followed the new idolatry with enthusiasm, upbraided for their apostasy, but hardly checked in their fall by the indignant protests of the prophets. It was under these conditions that Elijah appeared and fought the good fight with the prophets of Baal.

From Jeroboam, the first, to HOSHEA, the last, of the kings of Israel, there were nineteen reigns. The rulers who held the throne during this period belonged to no fewer than nine different houses—a fact indicative of the extreme turbulence of the kingdom. NADAB, the successor of Jeroboam, was murdered by his successor, BAASHA. The latter had some military ambition, and built a fortress at Ramah, with a view to future encroachments on the kingdom of Judah; but Ben-hadad, king of Syria and friend of Judah, drove the Israelite back into his own country. ELAH succeeded to the throne only to be slain by ZIMRI, who was king for a week, when he in turn was deposed by OMRI, who had been Elah's captain of the host. Then came AHAB and JEZEBEL, whose unsavory names have offended all christendom. She outlived her husband, as well as AHAZIAH, who succeeded him, until she and her favorite son JEHOHAM were both put to death by JEHU, captain of the guard. The latter took the kingdom, and held it long enough to lose all his territories



THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON.

These temporary successes were extended by JEROBOAM II., the ablest king of Israel, who regained all that the surrounding nations had won from his kingdom, and restored the former borders of Israel. After him, however, there was another lapse, both ZECHARIAH and SHALLUM—the next two kings—being murdered in the same year. MENAHEM succeeded to the throne, and undertook a vain-glorious expedition against the Babylonians, whose dominions he invaded as far as Thapsacus. This town he took, only to be quickly expelled and followed to his own dominions by Pul the Babylonian.

The next two reigns, of PEKAHIAH and PEKAH, were of little importance. During this time (762-730 B. C.) Tiglath-Pileser, of Assyria, overran the territories of Israel and reduced the kingdom to the last extreme. Hoshea, the last king of Israel, came to the throne in B. C. 730, and held it for nine years, when, after a two years' siege of his capital, he was taken and the nationality of Israel extinguished by Shalmaneser—a full account of which is given in the History of Assyria.<sup>1</sup>

The kingdom of Judah, ruled over by the descendants of David during twenty reigns—covering a period of three hundred and sixty—

east of the Jordan in a war with Hazael, king of Damascus. It was at this epoch that Israel first became tributary to Assyria, in the reign of Asshur-Nazir-Pal, monarch of that country. In the times of JEHOAHAZ, successor of Jehu, the Syrians made further conquests from Israel, and the kingdom appeared on the verge of extinction until the military abilities of JOASH, the next king of the line, restored a part of what had been lost during the two preceding reigns.

<sup>1</sup> See Book III., p. 175.



nine years—has a history somewhat more reputable than that of Israel. The people had fewer vices, and fewer of their kings suffered death by violence. A long list of misfortunes, however, came upon the kingdom, not a few of which were precipitated either by the folly of the people or the treachery of their rulers. Judah, as has already been asserted, lay on the highway between Babylonia and Egypt, the rival powers of the East and the West; and the Jewish nation was not infrequently ground between the upper and the nether mill-stone. Thus, during the reign of Rehoboam, the first king of Judah, Jerusalem was taken and pillaged by Shishak of Egypt. There were, also, constant troubles with Israel. ABLJAM, the successor of Rehoboam, gained some successes over that kingdom, especially the capture of Bethel, one of the ancient sacred places of the nation. ASA, the next king, was so hard pressed, by the Egyptians on one side and the Israelites on the other, that he was obliged to despoil the temple of its treasures in order to purchase the help of Ben-hadad of Damascus. JEHOASHAPHAT, the next king, made an alliance with the Israelite Ahab, and the two made common cause against the Syrians; but the people of Judah paid dearly for the advantage on account of the idolatrous practices which flowed in with this friendly intercourse. While JEHORAM was king, a horde of Philistines and Arabs gained possession of Jerusalem. Later, Athaliah, mother of AMAZIAH, killed all of her offspring, except Joash, and instituted the worship of Baal instead of that of Jehovah. Idolatry was rampant for a season, until the queen was overthrown in a revolt headed by Jehoida, the high-priest.

Of the reigns of JOASH, AMAZIAH, UZZIAH, JOTHAM, AHAZ, HEZEKIAH, MANASSEH, and AMON there is little to be recorded, except a steady decline of the kingdom, accompanied with domestic troubles and petty wars. JOASH's reign was an epoch of partial restoration. The land was cleared of idolatry. The king showed himself to be a true iconoclast. The pagan altars were everywhere broken down and the idols ground to dust. After this work was done the temple was renovated,

and the ancient worship of Jehovah restored in comparative purity. It was at this time that a copy of the Mosaic Law was found and brought forth as a swift witness against the degeneracy of the Jewish nation.

The close of the reign of Josiah corresponds with the date of those devastating incursions of the Scythians, which have been hitherto narrated in the Second and Third Books. These barbarians found their way into Palestine, and even as far as Ascalon and Bethshan. At the former city they captured and despoiled the temple of Astarte, and the latter place took the name of the savage invaders, being known for many centuries as *Scythopolis*. About the same time that Judah was thus overrun by savages from the north-east, Pharaoh Necho of Egypt started on his campaign against Babylonia. Josiah, the king, for once loyal to the Babylonian sovereign, undertook to oppose the Egyptian's progress, but in the great battle of MEGIDDO was defeated and slain. Then followed the brief and disastrous reigns of JEHOIAKIM and JEHOIACHIN, and finally that of ZEDEKIAH, whose relations with Nebuchadnezzar were narrated at the beginning of this digression. With the overthrow of Zedekiah, in the year B. C. 586, the kingdom of Judah was extinguished. It had survived the rival kingdom established by Jeroboam one hundred and thirty-five years, but finally yielded to the same forces which had brought to an end the erratic career of the Ten Tribes of Israel.

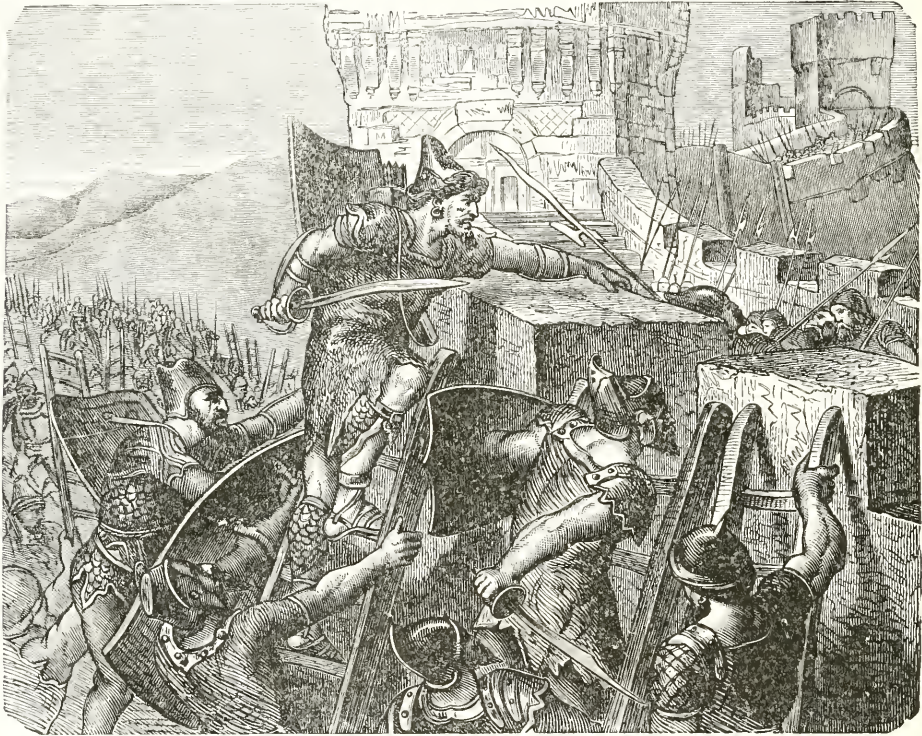
Resuming, then, the thread of Babylonian history: Tyre fell. For thirteen years it had withstood the siege, but in the year after the downfall of Jerusalem, namely, in B. C. 585, Nebuchadnezzar, now relieved from his embarrassments with the Jews, renewed in person the assaults on the Phœnician capital, and the investment was pressed to a successful issue.

Having thus secured, beyond peradventure, the capitals of two of the principal states of the West, Nebuchadnezzar was free to undertake the chastisement of Egypt. It will be remembered how Pharaoh Apries, having allowed Zedekiah to break with the Babylonians in the interest of Egypt, had

incontinently rushed to the support of his ally and had then incontinently rushed back again. Nebuchadnezzar now made preparations to punish his would-be rival, and, in B. C. 581, began an Egyptian campaign.

Herodotus and the records of Egypt differ as to the results of the invasion, the former stating that Apries was dethroned and put to death; the latter, that the Pharaoh continued to reign until many years afterwards, when he perished in an insurrection of his own subjects. The truth appears to be that in

and all around the outposts to the horizon of civilization, until his Empire extended from the Pillars of Hercules to the limits of Armenia and the foot of the Caucasus. For such extraordinary exploits and wide-spread dominion there are no sufficient grounds of historic belief. After all deductions, however, the wars of Nebuchadnezzar were sufficiently important and successful to win for him the name of a great conqueror, and to insure for his own capital and kingdom an era of peace and splendor.



SIEGE OF TYRE BY THE BABYLONIANS.

his *first* campaign, Nebuchadnezzar had no marked success; but that in a *second* invasion of the country, in B. C. 570, the king of Egypt was driven from his throne, to be succeeded by Amasis, who became tributary to the Babylonian Empire.

Such were the wars of the great king in Syria and the West. Besides these actual achievements tradition has built up about the name of Nebuchadnezzar almost as dazzling an array of conquests as of Sesostris or of Alexander. The Babylonian was even reputed to have made war in Africa and Spain

Perhaps the first great result of these imperial conquests was to bring into Babylon and the surrounding districts vast multitudes of captives, who sank at once to the level of a servile class. These hordes of driven creatures furnished at a trifling cost an unlimited supply of labor. The Babylonians were thus relieved from oppression, and found time to build and to banquet. There were thus afforded those limitless resources out of which arose the otherwise inconceivable wonders of Babylon. The conquered provinces were in a measure depopulated, in order that by de-



portation and colonization in and around Babylon all further danger of provincial insurrections might be removed, and at the same time an exhaustless supply of slave labor be furnished to meet the demands of the splendid capital, led and incited by imperial caprice.

Thus were begun and executed the princi-

Now it was that the incomparable Walls of Babylon, with their more than five hundred million cubic feet of solid masonry, were raised in massive grandeur around a circumference of forty-one miles. Now it was that the Hanging Gardens arose for the delight of the imperial spouse, capricious as Pompadour. Now it was that the great temple of Nebo at



CAPTIVE JEWS LED INTO BABYLONIA.

After the painting by E. Bendemann.

pal monuments of Babylonian greatness: for most of these wonders belong to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. It was the captive Jews, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Syrians, and Moabites—swept hitherward in the wake of the victorious armies of the Empire—who for the most part reared those stupendous masses of masonry which even to-day in ruins break here and there the horizon of the Babylonian plain as if with the shoulders of a mountain.

Borsippa, hidden at present under the mountainous Birs-Nimrud, was reared as if to the skies. Now it was that the almost equally grand temple of Belus at Babylon was extended and adorned. Now it was that the vast reservoir of Sippara, one hundred and forty miles in circumference and one hundred and eighty feet in depth, was dugged and furnished with its flood-gates and sluices. Now it was that not only the banks of the Eu-

phrates, but also the shores of the Persian Gulf, were lined with quays and warehouses for the safety and convenience of them that go down to the sea in ships. Now it was that on more than a hundred sites in Babylonia cities were built, any one of which, but for the superior splendor of Babylon, would have been worthy to perpetuate the fame of the king. Now it was that the grand canal from the city of Hit, on the Euphrates, to the sea, a distance of four hundred miles, carrying through the alluvial plain a broad stream of water that gave life and kept the desert at bay, was excavated by the servile armies that Nebuchadnezzar had brought home in the wake of conquest. No wonder that the captive Hebrew cried out, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept."

The old writers have left not a few traces of the personal character of this great king. By the Jewish historians he is generally depicted as a sanguinary and cruel monarch. If his conduct with respect to the Jews be viewed apart from the provocations which led to the same, there is good ground for the antipathy manifested by Israelitish authors. But it must be remembered that the kings of Israel were guilty of constant duplicity, and that the severe punishments which followed came as a necessary consequence under the military practices of the times. In the case of the slaughter of Zedekiah's sons before the face of their father and the putting out of his own eyes, there could be found little palliation for the atrocity. The act, however, was in keeping with the spirit of the age, and could be easily paralleled in the history of almost any other oriental nation.

Of the splendor and magnificence of Nebuchadnezzar, as displayed in his court and government, there can be no doubt. His audiences before his courtiers and foreign ambassadors were a pageant perhaps unequalled in the ancient world. He was surrounded by a retinue of princes, governors, and captains, whose gorgeous apparel and courtly manners made the throne a cynosure. The halls of his palace were thronged with counselors and soothsayers, who, according to common fame, were expert in the lore of both earth and

heaven. His coffers were filled with untold treasures, gathered by taxation and tribute and war from nearly all the nations of Western Asia. To have withstood the volume of adulation which rose in clouds around his throne would have implied a type of character unknown in his age and country. The great king was proud and haughty. He ordered to be made of himself a golden image ninety feet in height and nine feet in breadth! And he was not free from the Egyptian folly of claiming a measure of divine honors.

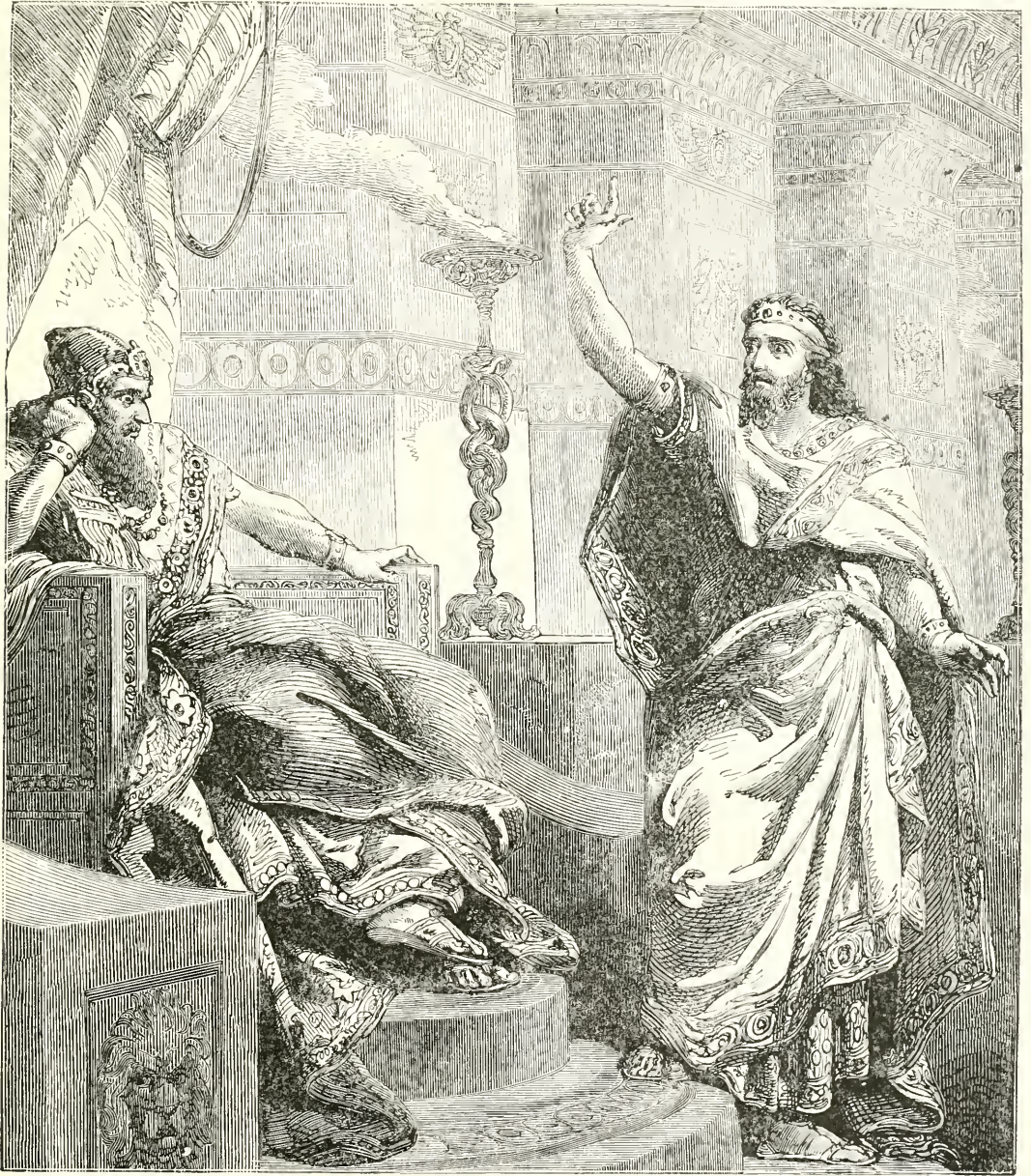
To the credit of the king may be mentioned his loyalty to his queen. It was hardly to be expected that a princess of a foreign nation, given to him without his choosing and for reasons purely political, would have gained, much less retained, an ascendancy over his mind and affections. But Amyitis charmed her royal spouse, and maintained such an influence over him as to become a powerful factor in the government. Besides the Hanging Gardens erected for her delight, many other works, public and private, gave proof of the esteem in which she continued to be held by the king.

The old age of Nebuchadnezzar was not unlike that of Louis XIV. In the midday of their power each might well be called the Grand Monarch. In the hour of the setting sun each might well be commiserated for the woes that befell him. When well advanced in years, the king of Babylon dreamed a dream. It was the vision of a tree reaching unto heaven, and bearing leaves and fruit for the blessing of the nations. Suddenly a watcher appeared, and said, "Hew it down, and cut off his branches. Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts." All of the soothsayers and astrologers of the court failed to interpret this strange vision until the Hebrew Daniel was called in, who declared to the monarch that he himself was the tree which should be hewn down and have his branches cut away; that the king should be smitten and driven forth to live with the beasts of the field until his



pride should be humbled and his reason restored. So Nebuchadnezzar was visited with madness. He imagined himself a beast, and went forth on all fours into the fields. He

his reason suddenly returned, and he was allowed a brief interval of glory and peace before his death. His reign covered a period of forty-four years, and is by far the most



DANIEL INTERPRETING THE DREAM OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

lived on herbs, and slept under the open canopy at night. Under the influence of the lycanthropy which had attacked him, he barked like a wolf. He became hairy by exposure to the elements, until after seven years

illustrious in the annals of the Babylonian Empire.

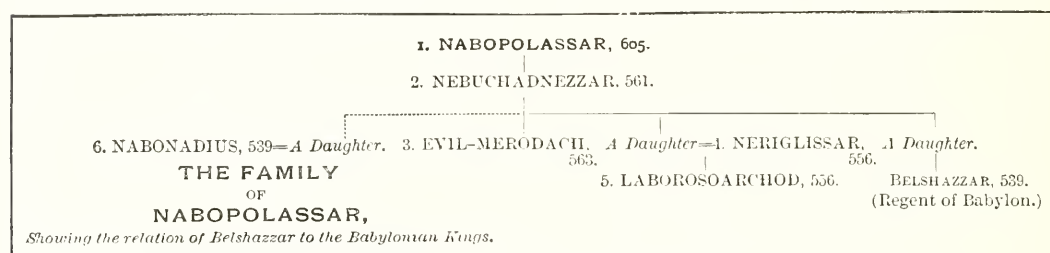
Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded in B. C. 557 by his son, EVIL-MERODACH. He appears not to have possessed his father's courage or



abilities. He had been reared in the court rather than in the field, and his tastes were little inclined to war and great enterprises of state. It seems that the circumstances of his father's affliction, and the part played by Daniel in relation thereto, had influenced his mind towards religious subjects and made a favorable impression regarding the Hebrew captives. Under these impulses the young king ordered the now aged Jehoiachin, who had been in a Babylonian prison for thirty-five years, to be set at liberty. The Israelite was advanced to honor at the court, and is said to have become one of the king's counselors. Other marks of favor were shown to the Jewish captives, whose condition from this time forth became more tolerable than that of most of their fellow exiles. But before any important measures were undertaken in

Palace. The ruins of this edifice indicate that it was a royal residence, second only in proportions and splendor to the greater wonder on the opposite side of the Euphrates. The house of Neriglissar was ornamented with the best art of the times, and but for the superior magnificence of its rival, would have been regarded as the special glory of Babylon.

The reign of Neriglissar was brief, lasting only for a little over three years. He was succeeded by his son LABOROSARCHOD, a mere youth, unable either in age or abilities to bear the vast responsibilities of the Empire. The ambitious princes of the court, tired of inefficiency, resolved on heroic measures. Accusations of crime were put forth against the young king, who, incapable of defense, was seized, dethroned, and put to death with



their behalf an insurrection broke out in which, after a reign of only two years, Evil-Merodach was driven from his throne and killed.

The leader of this revolt was Neriglissar, a turbulent spirit, who had married Nebuchadnezzar's daughter. He had participated in the Western wars of that great king, and had imbibed the military ardor of his sovereign. His character was thus more in accord with the temper of the Babylonians than was that of Evil-Merodach, and the revolution was easily accomplished. NERIGLISSAR ascended the throne without opposition as the fourth king in the line of Nabopolassar. His accession was all the more readily accepted on account of a claim which he advanced to be a descendant of one of the old kings of Babylon. The principal event of his reign, which was peaceful, was the erection, across the river from the great palace of Nebuchadnezzar, of what is known as the Lesser

torture. With his overthrow the House of Nabopolassar, which had held the throne of Babylonia for seventy years, was extinguished, and the crown was conferred by the conspirators upon one of their own number named NABONADIUS. He had been an important officer in the government, but had no claim by blood relationship to royal honors. To remedy this defect in title he immediately sought a marriage with one of the daughters of Nebuchadnezzar, and to placate the ghost of legitimacy the widow of Neriglissar was taken to the royal couch. After the marriage no trouble was anticipated, nor did any occur relative to the right of the usurper to be king.

Babylonia was now on the eve of great events. Scarcely was Nabonadius securely seated on the throne when an embassy came to Babylon from Sardis, the capital of Lydia. The business was of the utmost moment. The circumstances of the overthrow of the king-

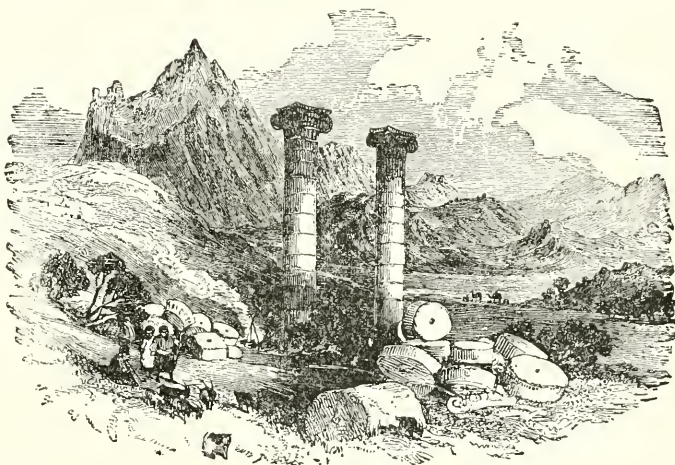


dom of the Medes by Cyrus will be readily recalled.<sup>1</sup> The ambitious young prince of Persia very little resembled either in character or policy the unambitious Astyages, whom he had beaten out of an empire. The Persian at once entered on a career of conquest. Dissatisfied with a dominion embracing not only his paternal kingdom, but also that of Media, inclusive of all Cyaxares had retained of the Assyrian Empire, Cyrus looked boldly to the West, and discovered on the horizon the rich domains of Lydia. That realm discerned the approaching danger, and doubting of its own ability to cope single-handed with so powerful an enemy at once sought to contract alliances with the neighboring powers. To this end, in the year B. C. 555, legates were sent to Nabonadius, who had thus to decide between the risk which he himself might soon have to take from the overgrown ambition of Persia, and the certainty of exciting the hostility of Cyrus by accepting the overtures of the Lydians. The latter alternative was chosen. The proposed alliance between Lydia and Babylonia was consummated. The two kingdoms agreed to coöperate in the maintenance of mutual independence against the threatened encroachments of the Persians.

Nabonadius had the wisdom to see that his course would in the near future bring on a trial of arms between himself and Cyrus. To prepare for this emergency was, therefore, the first and great care of the Babylonian. He accordingly began a series of works in and about Babylon, the object of which was to secure the capital and government against the coming storm. The nature of these works was such as to indicate that the people had already fallen into that stage of helplessness which prefers the impotent array of walls and barricades to the decisive battle of the open plain. In the first place the Euphrates was confined within walls, which were closed at the street crossings with ponderous

gates of bronze. Thus, though an enemy might enter by the river, he would find himself between huge battlements, and would be no more in the city than he was outside the ramparts.

In addition to this, a great wall—described by Xenophon—a hundred feet high and twenty feet in thickness, extending across the Mesopotamian plain from the Euphrates to the Tigris, was interposed against the approach of an army from that direction. The surface of the country towards the north was likewise cut transversely with canals and sluices to impede the progress of invasion from the side of Assyria. Ample time was given to complete these great works; for the



RUINS OF SARDIS.

Persians and the Lydians were already engaged in war.

CRESUS, king of Lydia, had acted with too great haste. Without awaiting the movements of the Babylonians he plunged into the fight with Cyrus. The latter pressed forward into the country of his antagonist, whom he overthrew in the battle of PTERIA, and then besieged the capital. After an investment Sardis fell; Cræsus was taken prisoner, and his kingdom, reduced to submission, was annexed to the Persian Empire.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is narrated in a tradition which has gone into the literature of all lands, that the Lydian king was condemned to die by fire. When the pyre was prepared and Cræsus was seated thereon awaiting the application of the torch, he cried out, "O, Solon, Solon!" For he remembered the

<sup>1</sup> See Book IV., p. 344.

In these events Nabonadius had borne no hand, being occupied with the defenses of his own capital. These were completed. A period of fourteen years elapsed before Cyrus turned his attention to the great power which by the Lydian alliance had thrown down the gage of battle. The actual invasion of Babylonia did not begin until B. C. 539, and then Nabonadius behind his ramparts regarded the movement with contempt. It was not thought possible that the Persian could penetrate to the capital, or that if he did, he could make the slightest impression upon the massive fortifications of the city.

Cyrus was now on the march. About midway between Ecbatana and Babylon an incident occurred highly characteristic of the times. In crossing the river Gyndes one of the white horses which drew the chariot of the sun was drowned. The Persian king thereupon ordered a halt, and consumed the better part of the summer and fall in *punishing the river*, which he did by scattering its waters through three hundred and sixty channels into the desert! In the following spring he was enabled to resume *the less important* work of overthrowing an Empire! Such was the folly of antiquity.

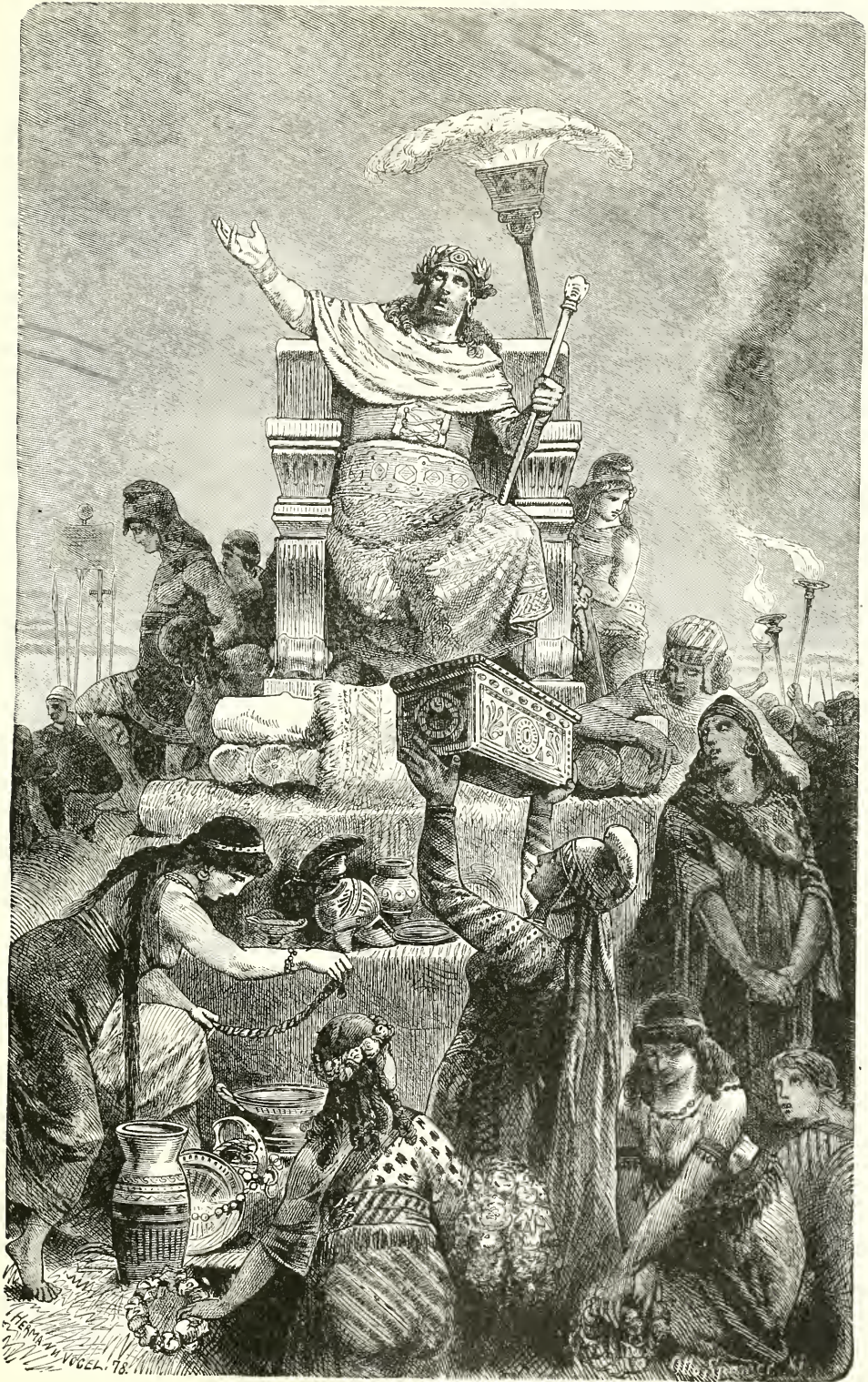
Cyrus crossed the Tigris without opposition, and found himself in Babylonia. He proceeded to the immediate vicinity of Babylon, where he was encountered by the army of Nabonadius, who had resolved to risk a battle in defense of his capital. In the conflict which ensued the Babylonians were completely defeated. The larger portion of the army retreated into the city, but the king with the remainder threw himself into Borsippa, thus perhaps hoping to divide the forces of his antagonist. But the hope was vain. He who was fool enough to attack the Gyndes for drowning a horse, was wise enough to know that Babylon was the object of his endeavor.

declaration of the Athenian sage that none might be truly considered happy until they were dead. This exclamation led to an inquiry on the part of Cyrus as to what god it was that Croesus called upon. On hearing the story of Solon and his sayings, the half-barbaric mind of the Persian was struck with admiration, and Croesus was released from the penalty.

Meanwhile in the city there was little alarm. Belshazzar, the eldest son of the king, had remained therein, and to him, when his father went forth to contend with the Persians, the general direction of affairs was naturally intrusted. The queen, his mother, also remained in the city, against the walls of which for a season the hosts of Cyrus beat in vain. Indeed, the Persian soon despaired of taking Babylon by any direct or open means. He therefore resorted to an audacious expedient, which was planned and executed with entire success. Leaving a portion of his troops to occupy the attention of the Babylonians before the city walls, he withdrew with the remainder to a safe distance up the river, and there having marked the topography of the country, undertook the work of dispersing a large part of the waters of the Euphrates from the natural bed into canals which he had cut for the purpose. When the work was done, and every thing was in readiness to dissipate the river, Cyrus still delayed. He had learned that the great annual festival of the Babylonians was about to be celebrated, and he awaited the coming of that event as the best time to strike the impending blow.

Meanwhile, the Babylonians, in contempt of an enemy whom they supposed to be foiled in his purposes, made unusual preparations for the great feast. The young prince, Belshazzar, gave himself up recklessly to the occasion. A thousand nobles were invited to a royal banquet at the palace. There was splendor within and darkness without. It was the night of doom. While the revel was going on in the wild abandonment of victorious debauchery, the hardy Persian was opening the sluices into his canals above the city. The river began to sink, but made no moan. The invaders hurried along the banks to the wall of the city. There was no alarm. The river had left on either side a broad space of bare ground. The Persians passed in without opposition. The noise of the festival resounded afar. The river-gates were seized by the invaders, who now sounded the tocsin and began the assault. It was a gigantic massacre. The drunken Babylonians fled





CRÆSUS ON THE FUNERAL PYRE.

Drawn by H. Vogel.

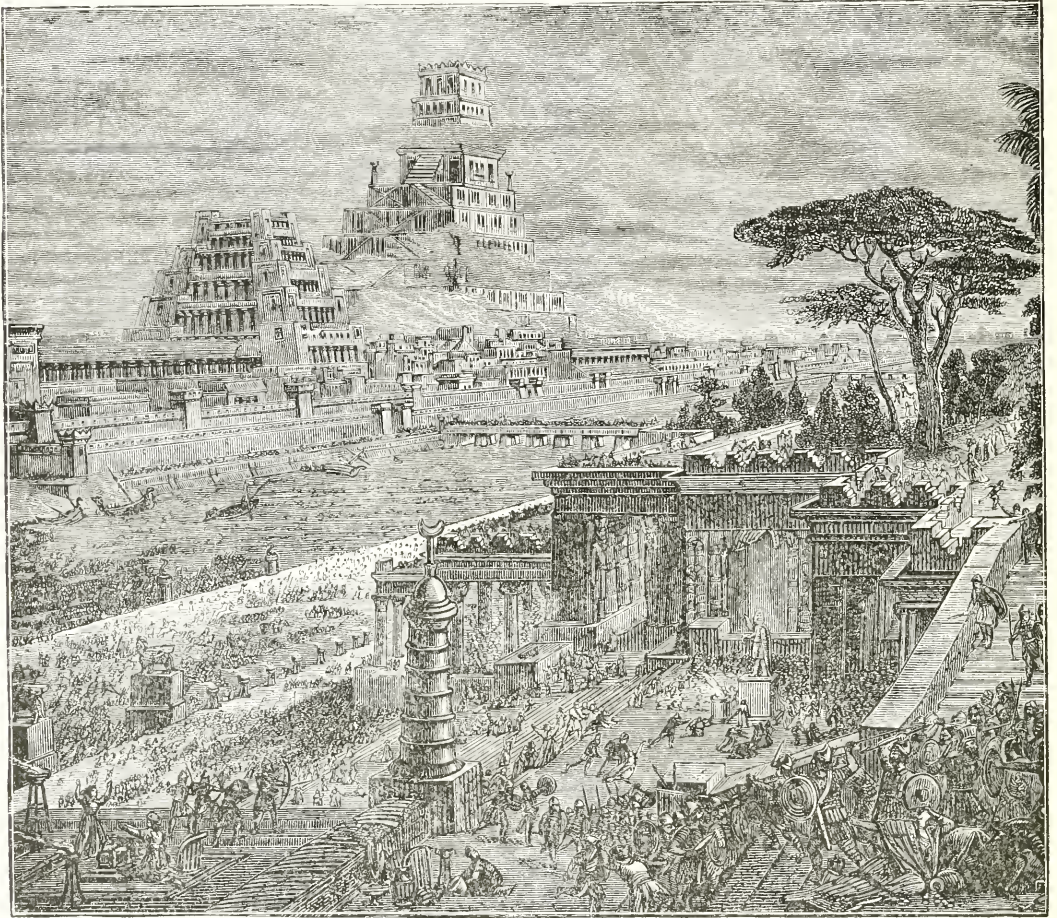


in all directions. The prince Belshazzar and his nobles were slain at their banquet, and the dawn found the victorious Persian in complete possession of the city.

As soon as possible he dismantled the outer walls, and then proceeded against Nabonadius.

dethroned king the governorship of the province of Carmania.

It was the last act in the drama of the great Empire. "The kingdom was given to the Medes and Persians." A new power had arisen, whose energies were still freshened with



CAPTURE OF BABYLON.

The latter was still at Borsippa, awaiting an opportunity to strike a blow at the invader. But the invader came swiftly upon him, and the king, seeing the uselessness of a further struggle against the inevitable, went forth and surrendered. Honorable terms were granted by Cyrus, who treated the subject army with consideration, and bestowed on the

the breezes of the hills and whose natural ambitions had not yet been quenched in the cups of luxury and lust. "The beauty of the Chaldees' excellency" faded like the shadow of a pageant from the great canvas of history, and the glory of Babylon began to hide itself under the dust and ruin of the ages.

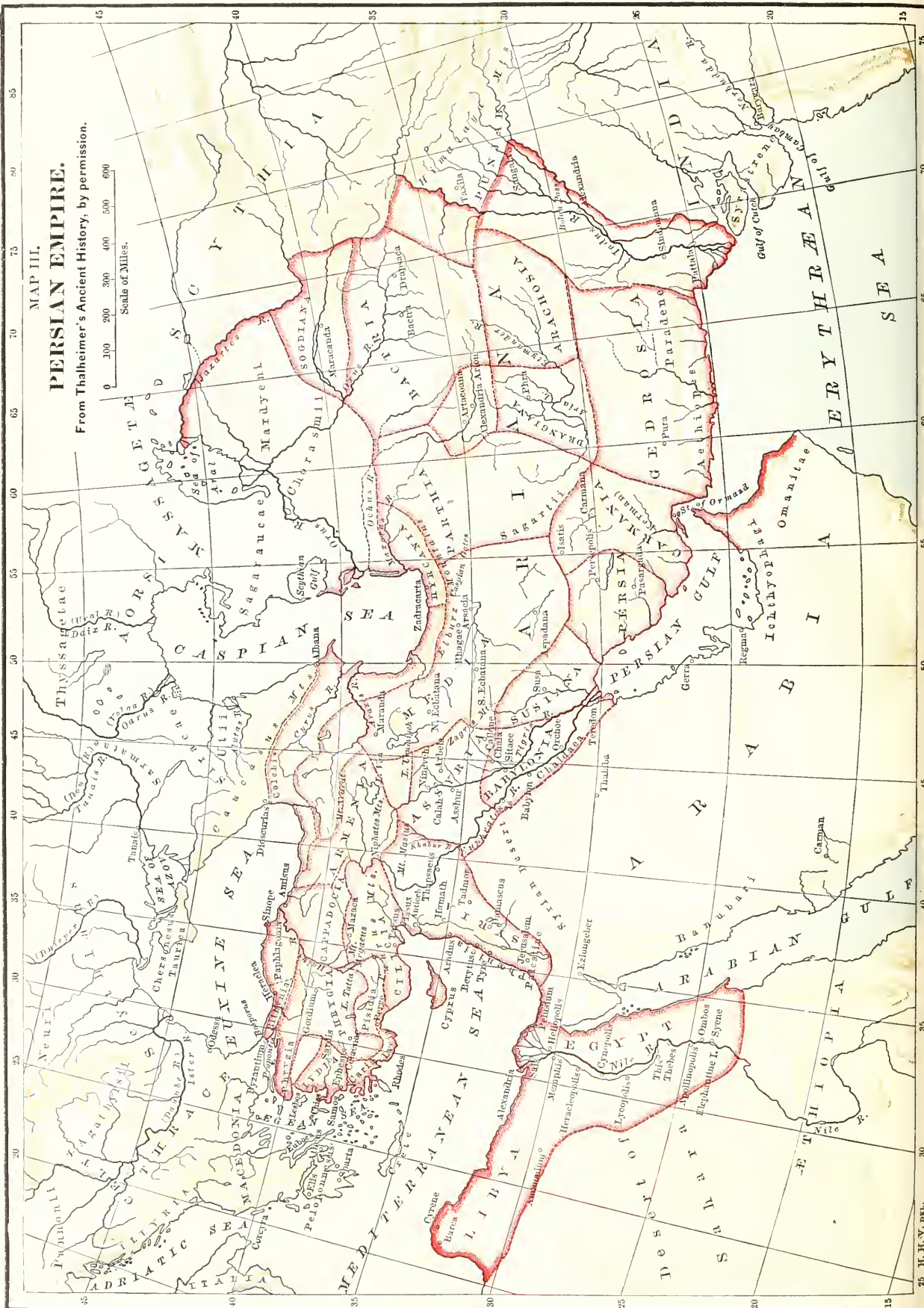




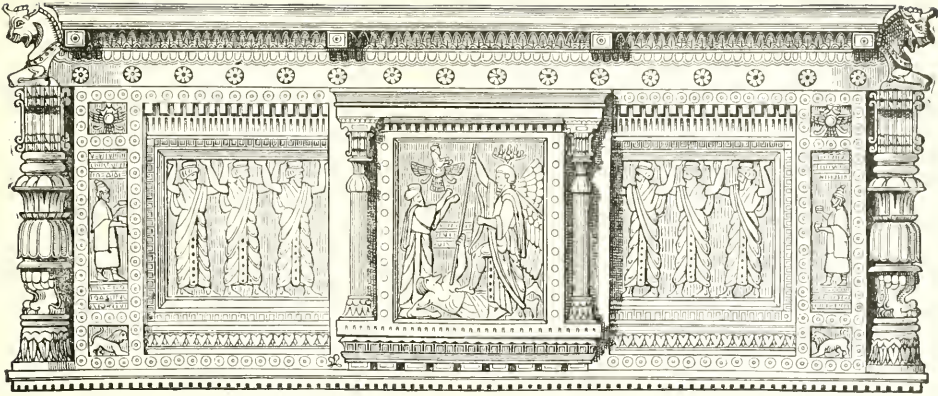
# PERSIAN EMPIRE.

From Thalheimer's Ancient History, by permission.

Scale of Miles.  
0 100 200 300 400 500 600



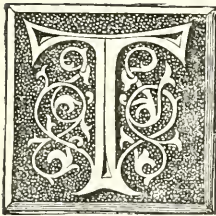




## Book Sixth.

# PERSIA.

## CHAPTER XXVI.—THE COUNTRY.



THE Persian Empire, established by Cyrus the Great, was of vast extent. After the dominion of the Caesars, no other kingdom of the ancient world had equal territorial limits. From east to west the rule of the Achæmenian kings extended over more than fifty-six degrees of longitude, and from north to south through twenty degrees of latitude. The boundaries of the Empire on the east were the river Indus and Thibet; on the south, the Persian Gulf and the deserts of Arabia and Nubia; on the west, the Great Desert, the Mediterranean, the Ægean, and the river Strymon; on the north, the Danube, the Euxine, the Caucasus, the Caspian, and the Jaxartes.

Such was the territorial horizon of the great kings. A right line from the eastern to the western limit of the Empire reached as far as from New York to San Francisco; and the measure from north to south was, in its greatest dimension, fully one thousand five hundred miles. The entire area was more than eight times as great as Babylonia, four

times as great as Assyria, and more than one-half as great as the whole of modern Europe. The Persian territories embraced fully two million square miles.

Glancing at the political divisions of the Empire, we find an array of provinces and subordinate kingdoms almost equal in number and extent to the *Provinciæ* of Rome. The general divisions were into three groups: the Central, the Eastern, and the Western. The Central provinces were Persia Proper, Susiana, Babylonia, Assyria, Media, the Caspian district, and the Great Desert. The Eastern were Hyrcania, Parthia, Asia, Chorasmia, Sogdiana, Bactria, Scythia, Sattagydia, India, Paricania, Eastern Ethiopia, and Mycia. The Western were Peonia, Thrace, Asia Minor, Armenia, Iberia, Syria, Palestine, Phœnicia, Egypt, and Cyrenaica. Most of these countries, especially the more important, have been already described in the preceding Books. Others will be considered in subsequent portions of the work. It remains, in this connection, to describe briefly the character, climate, and resources of that district which constituted the nucleus of the Empire.

PERSIA PROPER, corresponding almost pre-

cisely in boundaries with the modern province of Faristan, lay upon the gulf of the same name, and extended from the river Tab to the Indian Ocean. It was bounded on the east by Mycia, on the north by Media, on the west by Susiana, and on the south by the ocean. Its length from east to west was four hundred and fifty miles, and its breadth an average of two hundred and fifty miles, giving a geographical area of over one hundred thousand square miles, being about one-half as large as Spain. This territory exceeds that of modern Faristan to the extent of including the ancient province of Carmania, which now constitutes the district of Kerman.

The most distinctly marked natural division of Persia Proper was—and is—into a Warm and a Cold district, the former being about one-eighth and the latter seven-eighths of the whole territory. The Hot region, a strip from ten to fifty miles in width, lies next to the sea, and consists of the eastern extension of the Susianian plain. It is a kind of a half-desert, saline district, whose salt sands, sloping to the sun, are heated to an unusual degree, and drink up the streams which, few and sparse, make a feeble struggle to reach the ocean. In summer the temperature is excessive. The air glows and fluctuates and flings up the mirage like that of Arabia. The soil is gravel and clay—poor in almost every quality of productiveness.

The Cold region of ancient Persia was an upland, flanked with ranges of mountains. From Isbahan, in a south-westerly direction, runs a lofty chain, which, in the province of Kerman, turns to the west, and thus supports the larger part of Faristan on the east and south. It is in the angle thus formed that the Persian upland lies—a district in every respect different from the hot belt which, south of the mountains, slopes to the sea. The high tract included in the ranges east and south is generally broken. Here and there hills rise to mountains. Plains are interspersed. At intervals verdant valleys appear, rich in their luxuriance. It is the common verdict of travelers that the region is in many respects one of the most beautiful in the world. There are situations which, for loveli-

ness and romantic scenery, rival the vales of Greece; but these are contrasted in other parts with landscapes which, from the scantiness of water, sink into comparative sterility. The north-eastern portion of Persia is for the most part of this character. In this region the streams are of the same sort as those of Media, many of them running in sunken channels or dwindling away to nothing in a country of sand.

The chief rivers of Persia are the TAB and the ARAXES. The former has been already described in the History of Babylonia.<sup>1</sup> The latter rises in the mountains of Bakhtiyari, and flows in a south-easterly direction past the ruins of Persepolis. Here it receives the PULWAR, and thence makes its way to the salt lake Neyriz, in which it is lost. In all the lower course of this river the waters are drawn off at intervals into canals, which, traversing the country, furnish the means of irrigation. The volume of the stream is thus greatly reduced, and the remnant discharged into the lake is insignificant.

Next in importance may be mentioned the KOONAZAIBERNI, a small stream which rises near the ruins of Shapur. Pressed between ranges of lofty hills, it traverses a valley for nearly a hundred miles, and reaches the Persian Gulf a short distance north of the city of Bushire. All the other streams of the country are of comparatively little importance.

Of other inland bodies of water the largest is the lake NEYRIZ, above referred to. It is about sixty miles in length and five miles broad. In summer, owing to the intense heat, its dimensions are greatly reduced. When this occurs the inhabitants make the most of nature's offer by gathering large quantities of salt from the exposed bed, after the manner already described in the account of the lakes of Syria. The second lake in size is the DERIAH NEMEK, about ten miles from the town of Shiraz. It is also a "dead" sea, having no outlet. It has an area of about forty square miles; the character of the waters is the same as that of Neyriz. A few other small lakes are found in different parts of the country, but none contain fresh water.

<sup>1</sup>See Book Fifth, p. 245.



In its general features the country is mountainous. The geographical peculiarity of the ranges is the frequent gorges and chasms by which they are cleft in twain. Not only where the mountains are divided for the passage of streams, but in many other places where nature makes no such demand, the chains are parted, so that transit from one side to the other is easy. In many districts roads are made through these great chasms, on either side of which rise frightful precipices of rock, some of which are two thousand feet high. Sometimes the abyss is closed overhead, and the road winds under a grotto.

The range already referred to as dividing the Hot from the Cold region of Persia is cleft in no fewer than four places by these striking and picturesque mountain gorges. These passes have in all ages furnished the inhabitants with a safe and easy route from the inland districts to the sea, and at the same time, from their defensibility, have ever been a safeguard in war. A few men at the top of the chasms can easily make the passage of an army impossible. It was in the very entrance to one of these mountain gorges that PASARGADÆ, the ancient capital of the country, was situated.

Of political divisions in Persia Proper there were five: Paractacene, Mardyene, Taocene, Ciribo, and Carmania. The first of these lay among the mountains of Bakhtiyari. The second was adjacent to the first, and extended from Bebahan to Kazerun. Taocene lay in the Hot district along the coast. Ciribo was the other division of the same region. The eastern part of the Persian upland was known as Carmania—the modern Kerman. Between these political districts into which the country was divided there were no natural lines of demarkation, the only distinction of that kind being the mountain range already referred to as dividing the coast region from the tablelands.

Nearly one-half of Persia Proper was uninhabitable. The mountain regions could support only a scanty population. The sandy plains, devoid of vegetation and incrustated with salt, could sustain no animal life. It was on the hill-slopes, and by the banks of

infrequent rivers, and in the valleys that a population accumulated and flourished. The uplands generally tended to sterility, and the landscape in such regions had a touch of desolation, dropping away to a brown horizon of cheerlessness and solitude.

The forests of Persia were in the mountains. Between Bebahan and Shiraz there is a tract of fine wood land sixty miles in extent, and from the latter city eastward towards Carmania is an attractive country of low hills covered with timber and divided by luxuriant valleys. The plains about Shiraz and Kazerun are beautiful in appearance, and even under their scanty supply of water produces abundant crops. Such is the general character of Persia Proper, the heart of the great Empire of the Achæmenian kings.

Turning to the provinces and countries which were conquered by the Persian monarchs and added to their dominions, we find many of those already described in the histories of Chaldæa, Media, and Babylonia. But the limits of Persia reached far beyond these countries, and embraced others of which no account has hitherto been given. Some of the regions with which we are now brought into contact lay eastward from Persia Proper, some to the far north-west, and some to the south-west, looking to Africa.

Beginning with the eastern part of the Empire, we have first of all the Great Plateau of IRAN, a vast region extending through twenty degrees of longitude, and raised to an elevation of five thousand feet above the level of the sea. It has a breadth of seven degrees, forming a kind of rectangle with an area of five hundred and fifty thousand square miles. The grand plateau extends from the Zagros mountains to the valley of the Indus, and embraces the great countries of Khorasan and Afghanistan.

Two-thirds of this vast region are a desert. The plain is high and rainless. The few streams that descend from the mountain slopes flow a short distance and are swallowed in the sands. Of all the rivers on the northern and western sides, only two contribute sufficient water to form lakes. On the south the mountains are cleft here and there for the

passage of some more ambitious stream to the sea, but for the rest running water is a stranger. With the coming of the summer heats the limits of the desert are greatly extended; for many districts which in the brief spring-time put up a sudden verdure, wither to desolation under the cloudless skies and fierce suns of July. At such seasons of the year the river beds are dry and the air glows like a furnace.

In the western portions of the great plateau the conditions of nature are modified by the proximity of the mountains. Here the surface of the country is broken into ridges. Rain is more abundant, and many small streams trace the valleys with a band of life. In the south and east also the same changes occur as the limits of the table-land are approached, and the plains grow green as the hills rise above the horizon. But within these surrounding borders of comparative fertility there is little else than a barren waste of blackened sand: nor will there ever be.

On the north of the region here described is another not more attractive. It is the district occupied by the modern Khiva and Bokhara, bounded on the west by the Caspian, and running eastward through fourteen degrees of longitude. Its breadth is about the same, extending from the thirty-sixth to the fiftieth parallel of north latitude, a distance of more than eight hundred miles. The whole region is one of the most forbidding in the world. It is the great Sahara of the North, a vast trackless plain of red or black sand, blown up here and there into dunes by the bleak wind which finds nought else upon which to waste its vagrant energies. If it were not for the ranges of the Great and Little Balkan which, near the Caspian, break the surface with moderate elevations and furnish the conditions of rain, the whole region would be a treeless and almost lifeless desert.

To the modifying influence of these mountains must be added the presence of two large rivers which traverse the waste and pour their volumes into the basin of the Aral. These are the OXUS (the modern Amoo) and the JAXARTES (the modern Sir)—two streams of considerable historical importance. Others of

lesser note are the MURGAH, the ABI MESHED, the HERIRUD, the MAYMENE, the BALKH, and the AK SU. Most of these take their rise on the slopes of the mountains referred to, and flow desertward until they are lost in the sands. In some instances small, brackish lakes are formed as the termini of these streams. It is along the banks of these rivers that the only fertile soil of the country—except in proximity to the Balkans—is found. Here, in good seasons, a fair degree of fruitfulness is seen, and a line of orchards and cornfields and meadows marks the course of the river across the waste. Here, from times immemorial, the larger part of the population inhabiting this desolate region has been gathered.

Lying to the east of this desert of Bokhara and Khiva is the VALLEY OF THE INDUS, one of the most ancient seats of civilization. Its importance has been but feebly apprehended by the Western nations, to whom the Nile of the East has seemed like a dream on the horizon. The region drained by the Indus is divided into two distinct regions, a broad, triangular plain towards the north, and a long, narrow valley towards the south. The broad district of the north is a territory through which, gathering their waters from the hills, flow five considerable rivers converging into one—the Indus; and hence to this division of the country is given the name of Punjab, or *Five Rivers*. At the lower angle of this district the five valleys narrow into one, and through this to the sea flows the river of India. This valley is known in modern geography as SINDE, which is merely a variation of the word India or Hindu.<sup>1</sup>

The Punjab region has at the north a breadth of about three hundred and fifty miles, but the country narrows towards the south until, at the confluence of the Five Rivers, the breadth is not more than seventy miles. The whole length of the Indus valley is about eight hundred miles, and the average breadth below the Punjab is, approximately, fifty miles. The upper division of the country is mountainous towards the north, and

<sup>1</sup> In the native language the Indus is called the *Sindus*.



abuts against Kashmeer and Thibet. Sloping southward it sinks into a plain whose natural resources are unsurpassed. The area of the Punjab is about fifty thousand square miles.

The valley of the Indus proper is almost as fertile as that of the Nile. Like that river, the Indus is the father of the land. He divides his channel, giving off here an arm and there a branch for the perpetual nourishment of the hungry soil. All the way down from the twenty-eighth parallel to the sea these diverging channels are found at intervals, sometimes rejoining the parent tide and sometimes diffusing themselves completely in the districts which they water. As we descend to the sea we find on the right the ranges of Suliman and Hala, between which and the river lies the important plain of Gandava, with an area of seven thousand square miles—one of the richest tracts in the world. From this point southward the valley narrows for a hundred miles, and thence to the sea expands into the Delta of the Indus, a district of an area of more than one thousand square miles, rich as Egypt, but breeding malaria and subject to inundations. This is the rice field of India.

Passing westward from the mouth of the Indus along the coast to the Persian Gulf the traveler enters the long, narrow strip of shore land, once the native seat of the Ichthyophagi, or Fish Eaters. The region is bounded on the north by the Great Plateau of Iran, and on the south by the Indian Ocean. Its length from east to west is about five hundred and fifty miles, but its greatest breadth scarcely exceeds twenty miles. It slopes seaward, has a surface of scorched sand, and most of the streams run dry in summer. The winter rains, however, blown up heavily from the Indian Ocean, completely saturate the soil, and in some parts there is for a considerable season good pasturage and some fair crops of grain.

The next district requiring notice is that which is formed by the eastern outspreading and descent of the Elburz mountains. This high chain divides into a number of parallel ranges of no great height, between which flow such streams as the Etrek and the Gurgan;

and the valleys thus formed, with their general trend to the East, were among the most delightful within the limits of the Persian Empire. Another district less attractive was that lying east of Sogdiana and Bactria, the modern Chinese Tartary. It was one of the native seats of the Scythians, and contributed to the Persian army a quota of fearless half-savages. The country in the north and west was comparatively well-watered and fertile, but the remainder was an arid waste.—Such were the Eastern provinces of the Empire of Cyrus and Darius.

The North-western districts of that Empire were still more important. West of the Caspian Sea lies the great table-land of Armenia. This is indeed a continuation westward of the Great Plateau of Iran: they touch at the corners, and would be continuous but for the interposition of the Caspian. The western portion of the great elevation embraces not only Armenia Proper, but also a part of Modern Persia and most of Asia Minor.

The mountain ranges traversing this vast region extend from east to west, with transverse spurs running north and south. The most important chain is the Taurus, which really supports the plateau on the south-west, and traverses a large part of Asia Minor. The peaks of this range in the western portion rise to the height of ten thousand feet, and further east the elevation is still greater, reaching the line of perpetual snow. On the opposite or northern side of the plateau the mountains are not so high. These extend from the Mysian Olympus to the neighborhood of Kars. Between this northern range and the Taurus several parallel chains of slight elevation occur, and this country of high ridges and mountain spurs is Armenia—one of the most beautiful and valuable parts of the Persian Empire. From this province came the horses which the nobility proudly rode to battle. From these mountain slopes and hill sides was taken the larger part of the timber and stone demanded by the architects of Ecbatana and Persepolis.

West of Armenia lay Asia Minor, a country of vast resources. The general elevation is not great. A single mountain, Argeus,

risers to the height of thirteen thousand feet. The country is one of broad plains well-watered and fertile, rich in timber and minerals. Nearly every important product of the north temperate zone was found in this delightful region. The principal rivers were the Meander and the Hermus. Outside of the mountainous borders of Armenia and Asia Minor, on the north and north-east, were various lowland districts which were overrun by the armies of the Empire, but were not of much historical importance. South of the Taurus lay Lycia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia, provinces the names of which frequently occur in the annals of the times.

It must not be supposed that the limit of Persian ambition on the west was marked by the shore-line of the Ægean. Many of the littoral islands and the more remote Cyclades were both claimed and conquered by the successors of Cyrus. Of these may be mentioned Rhodes, Cos, Samos, Chios, Lesbos, Tenedos, Lemnos, Imbros, Samothrace, and Thasos. Further on, the extensive countries of Thrace and Pæonia were subjugated and held for twenty years by Darius. The general character of these islands and countries will be properly considered in the History of Greece.

More important than any other island conquest was that of Cyprus.<sup>1</sup> Here were fine forests. Here grew the vine and the olive. Here the cornfields flourished, and here the copper mines poured out their wealth. The island is one hundred and forty miles in length and thirty-five miles broad, somewhat mountainous in the interior, but in all respects a beautiful and valuable country.

Of the African districts brought under dominion of the Persians, the principal was Egypt, of which an ample geographical description has already been given in Book First. Beyond Egypt was Libya, a desert country dotted with oases. The tract lay along the Mediterranean, and varied considerably in breadth from a narrow strip to districts several hundred miles in width. The chief products were dates and the hides of

wild animals. From this region, moreover, a large proportion of the African slaves of antiquity were gathered by traders and pirates.

Further west along the coast was Cyrenaica, lying between the meridians of 20° and 23° 15' E. The country is a highland, and is for that reason well-watered and fruitful. Rich pastures and fields of grain might be seen even from times most ancient. The people were much more civilized than were the Libyan savages, and the province—which was the westernmost of the Persian dominions—was always regarded as among the best in Africa.

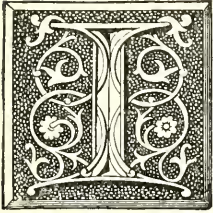
It will be remembered that in addition to vast districts and countries—Eastern, North-western, South-western—here described as parts of the Empire of the Achæmenians, all of the countries of Media, Babylonia, Assyria, and Egypt were likewise embraced in their almost world-wide dominion. The great bulk of the territory lay to the east; but outside of the valleys of the Indus and the Oxus the lands stretching out beyond Persepolis were of little value. Civilization has never been able, in those vast and arid regions, to maintain more than a precarious footing. The greater part was a riverless, shrubless waste, better adapted to the cultivation of jackals and bustards than to the development of highways and the growth of cities.

In the western half of the Empire nature was more generous. Here were the rich and powerful countries of Susiana, Media, Babylonia, Assyria, to say nothing of the fertile and productive countries of Syria, Armenia, and Asia Minor. Egypt herself, the harvest-field of the whole earth, was for a while included among the territorial treasures of the descendants of Cambyzes. Within their dominions six great rivers throbbed like tremendous arteries, sending life from the mountains to the seas. The Jaxartes, the Oxus, the Indus, the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Nile—such were the mighty currents on whose banks were gathered the subjects of Darius, and on whose bosoms floated fleets of boats bearing his treasures. It is now fitting to examine somewhat in detail the resources of the Empire, as determined by its climate and other natural conditions.

<sup>1</sup> It was from the Greek word *cyprios* [sc. *chalcos*], meaning copper, that the name of Cyprus was derived.



## CHAPTER XXVII.—CLIMATE AND PRODUCTS.



It is impossible to sketch in general terms the climatic peculiarities of a country extending through twenty degrees of latitude. The difficulty is heightened if the country extends for three thousand miles from east to west, and varies in its level from sunken gorges one thousand three hundred feet below the sea to mountains whose summits are twenty thousand feet in height. Only specific observations on different parts of the vast tract can give any adequate idea of the inner moods and outward aspects of Nature.

In Persia Proper—both ancient and modern—there are two kinds of climate. The narrow strip along the coast is a region of torrid heats. No snow is ever seen. Through the larger part of the year rain seldom falls. The one redeeming feature, so far as moisture is concerned, is the heavy dew, which saturates whatever is exposed to it at night. The early mornings are from this cause cool and refreshing. But as midday approaches, the scorching rays of the sun drive away every particle of vapor and burn the earth to a crisp. The thermometer marks as high as 125° F. Nature lies weltering or is blistered with heated sands blown in clouds before some sudden gust or sirocco. Only certain types of animal and vegetable life can survive the fierce heats of the worse than tropical summers. Men retreat from the coast and find refuge in the foot-hills, or even ascend the mountains, till the torrid season is past.

With the approach of autumn, when the reign of the sun is abbreviated and occasional showers are blown up from the sea, the situation again becomes tolerable, and such life as can be supported in the region finds a respite from the excesses of the climate. Along the whole coast, as far east as the excessive limit of the Empire, the same extreme heats are found, modified about the estuaries of occa-

sional rivers into the damp suffocations of water-vapor and malaria.

Passing into the uplands of Persia, a great change is encountered. The winters are cold. The thermometer marks fifteen degrees below the freezing point. Snow falls abundantly. Severe storms drive across the face of the country. Then, with the opening of spring, comes a heavy fall of rain. In summer the showers are few and scanty, and the autumns are very dry. The temperature of midsummer is not enervating, being nearly always modified by cool breezes. The fluctuation, however, between the noonday heat and the chill of night is so considerable as to put the constitution to the test of endurance.

Turning to the mountainous countries of the Elburz, the Zagros, and Armenia, a still more rigorous climate is experienced. With the return of the sun in summer the weather is bright and genial, but the winter blasts are furious, and the snow heaps up to a great depth in the gorges of the hills. The climate of Asia Minor was, on the whole, the best of any in the confines of the Empire. The meteorological character of Syria has been sufficiently noted in connection with the history of Babylonia; and that of Egypt, in Book First. Cyrenaica had a delightful climate. Except in winter there was no rain at all, but the summer vapors of the Mediterranean, heavy to saturation, drooping over the cool uplands of this peculiar region, came down in dews so copious as to leave all nature dripping: it was sufficient. In the winter time violent storms rolled along the coast, bellowing with thunder and pouring out floods of rain.

On the extreme east of the dominions of the Achæmenians lay the valley of the Indus, with such climatic conditions as are not, perhaps, encountered anywhere else in the world. The heats are so oppressive, the atmosphere so sultry, as to quench the energy of the strongest race if long exposed to their debili-

tating influence. For a while, in a rainless season, the valley will be filled with intolerable clouds of dust, driven into the eyes and nostrils of every thing alive, and then a tornado will roll up from the horizon and pour out a flood, whirled into sheets by furious winds. Then will come a lull; the stifling air becomes laden with hot vapors, under the influence of which human nature collapses. The delta of the great river is a locality so hot and dank, so infected with miasmatic vapors and flooded with poisonous waters, as to be unendurable except for a small portion of the year.<sup>1</sup>

Turning to the vegetable growths of the Empire, and beginning with the woodland, we find in Persia Proper a valuable, but not very extensive, forest. The prevailing trees are oaks, sycamores, poplars, planes, willows, cypresses, acacias, and junipers. The principal shrubs are the wild fig, the wild almond, the tamarisk, the myrtle, the box, the rhododendron, the tragacanth bush, the blackberry, and the liquorice-plant. Perhaps no country in the world is richer in native fruits than Persia. The date-palm flourishes. Lemons, oranges, and pomegranates abound. Grapes, apricots, and plums are found in all parts. Peaches, quinces, and apples are indigenous to the country. Pears, figs, and mulberries are gathered in abundance. The "royal" walnuts, sold in all the markets of the world, are from Persia. The almonds and pistachionuts served in the great hotels of Europe and America are in many cases a Persian product. In short, almost every variety of fruit produced in the north temperate zone either grows wild in this land, or else yields abundantly under transplantation.

In the matter of grain the products are almost equally various. Besides the usual small crops of the field many products peculiar to the country are added to her resources. Of this sort are madder, and indigo, and

henna. Opium and tobacco are also produced in large quantities, though it is quite certain that some of these were unknown in ancient times. Cotton has been from time immemorial a product of Persia, but Indian corn is of recent introduction.

The wild animals are almost identical with those of Mesopotamia.<sup>1</sup> The ichneumon, however, is not found west of the Zagros. It inhabits the strip of hot country next to the Indian Ocean. The birds of Persia are the same as those of Assyria and Babylonia. To these must be added the oyster-catcher, the hooded crow, and the cuckoo. In the matter of song birds the Persian woods and hedges can boast of a greater variety than almost any other country, thrushes and nightingales being of the number. Swallows, sparrows, and blackbirds also add their less artistic music.

The supply of fish was, so far as the coast countries were concerned, quite inexhaustible. In the Hot district of Southern Persia this article of food gave a name to the inhabitants, who were known to the ancient writers as Ichthyophagi. The sea also gave an unusual contribution in its whales, which were often cast ashore. The bones were a great treasure to the natives, who used them for building huts. The waters along the coast abounded in oyster-beds, from which the inhabitants scooped up with little exertion a large proportion of their food.

The rivers of the Empire were, as a general thing, well supplied with fish; but the same could not be said for the lakes, whose brackish waters were rarely capable of supporting life. The reptiles of the country were of the same species as those inhabiting Mesopotamia. Snakes have always prevailed in the Persian plateau, but they are not especially venomous. The insects, however, are peculiarly troublesome, many of the species being of a sort to endanger life by their bite or sting. Scorpions are everywhere, creeping into houses and furniture. In some districts there are poisonous spiders or tarantulas. There are also centipedes, whose bite is sometimes fatal. Among the lesser pests may be

<sup>1</sup>It remains for modern science to determine whether *any* locality, unless actually infected with living germs sown by some preceding contagion, will, under the influence of purely natural conditions, *produce disease*. If the so-called germ theory of disease be correct, then the question is answered in the negative.

<sup>1</sup>See Book Fifth, pp. 252-254.



mentioned mosquitoes, which swarm and buzz and bite with the ferocity of those infesting the banks of the Lower Mississippi.

At intervals Persia is greatly afflicted with locusts. They sometimes swarm up like the devouring plagues of Syria and Egypt. They generally come on the winds which blow from the coasts of Arabia. The sky is not infrequently darkened with the clouds of these devastating creatures that drop in myriads on every spot of greenness, leaving it a desolation. It only remains for the inhabitants when visited with this plague to avenge themselves by *eating the eaters*.

The domestic animals of Persia are the same as those of Media and Mesopotamia. The most valuable are the sheep and the goat. Cows and oxen are less esteemed. The horses are of many fine breeds, from the fleet Arabian to the heavy Turcomans used for common service. The sheep are, for the most part, black or brown, small and short-legged, but bearing fleeces of great fineness. Camels were employed by the ancient, as by the modern Persians, for carrying heavy burdens, and for other service requiring great endurance.

In the times of the Empire the mines of Persia were already in a flourishing condition. Gold and silver, copper and iron, were the principal metals produced therefrom. It is believed that the red-lead mines near Neyriz were also worked with advantage in the times of the Achæmenians. As to salt, the supply was limitless. From the exposed beds of lakes, and in some districts from the surface of the earth, it was taken up with little labor. In Carmania and some other provinces rock salt was found of several colors, and in great abundance. Near the city of Dalaki there were springs of naphtha and bitumen. Sulphur was a product of several districts, but the values of this mineral were little known or appreciated.

The pearl-fisheries of the Persian Gulf have been famous since the days of Darius. The pearls gathered from this source were reckoned the finest of all the East. In the uplands of the north several varieties of hard gems were found, but they were for the most

part of kinds less valuable than those of Babylonia and India.

Passing beyond the limits of Persia Proper, we come again to those great countries—Egypt, Chaldaea, Assyria, Media—whose animal and vegetable products and mineral resources have already been described in the preceding Books. Outside of the borders of these countries, in regions of which only the geography has thus far been sketched, there were many animals unknown in the dominions of Nebuchadnezzar and Ramses. In the country between the Elburz mountains and the Caspian the tiger has his haunts. He is also found on the borders of the Sea of Aral and in the valley of the Indus. In the latter locality elephants were not infrequent objects of wonder to Western travelers. The water of the Indus and the jungles along the banks were the native abode of the alligator and the crocodile. The hippopotamus was found only in Egypt. In Bactria was the home of the two-humped camel, that creature of prodigious strength and patient endurance, whose qualities made him almost a necessity of ancient civilization. The celebrated goat of Angora, with its heavy fleece of white, silk-like wool, should also be mentioned among the animals of the Empire. In Armenia and parts of Afghanistan the elk flourished and was reckoned among the most royal beasts of the chase.

Around the peaks of the Taurus circled the great vulture. In the Delta of the Indus ibises were abundant. The ostrich ranged the sandy regions of Mesopotamia, but was not found on the Persian plateau. The other birds were either those which have been hitherto noticed in the Books on Babylonia and Egypt, or were such as are common in most parts of the north temperate zone. Some of the reptiles require particular mention.

Of these first the iguana. This creature is found in Syria and Egypt. It is from a foot to three feet in length, and is the color of an olive, streaked with black. This is the animal which is so cordially bated in Mohammedan countries. Its attitude is thought to be in imitation of the followers of the Prophet when

they go to prayer! Therefore it is mercilessly killed by the faithful.

Contrary to popular belief the Egyptian asp is a reptile of considerable size, sometimes growing to the length of six feet. It is an exceedingly poisonous serpent and is easily angered. It has the power of distending the skin of its neck to a wonderful degree, and this it does when its wrath is kindled. It feeds on mice, frogs, and other vermin, and is not considered an unmixed evil even by those who are exposed to its often fatal presence. In the desert districts of Syria is found the cerastes, or horned snake, whose bite is still more deadly than that of the asp. The creature lies buried in the sand, from which it differs but little in color. Unnoticed it springs out like the rattlesnake, and a sudden

twinge in its victim's foot or hand is the signal of doom.

In the same countries with the cerastes and the asp is found the chameleon—that strange creature which assimilates the color of its surroundings. It has a most oddly shaped body, a long prehensile tail like that of an opossum, and a protruding eye of unusual brilliancy. Its motions are contradictory and ludicrous. Its pace is that of a snail, and the creature could never “make a living” but for the precision and lightning-like rapidity with which its long, round tongue is darted forth to seize its prey. Whatever is thus taken is gulped like a flash, and then the odd beast is as sober and devout as ever. The chameleon is the *bête noir* of the bugs of the Orient.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.—PEOPLE AND CITIES.



ACCORDING to the best ethnological views of modern times the great Aryan race, now distributed through Europe and America, had its origin within the Persian Empire. The province of Bactria has generally been selected as the geographical source of this widespread and aggressive family of mankind. From their native seat the primitive Aryans seem to have moved southward. The oldest division migrated into the Punjab, and passed thence down the various valleys to the confluence of the rivers in the Indus—and thence to the sea. Thus was established the Indic branch of the human family. A second division spread over the Great Plateau of Iran, constituting the Iranic stock, of which the Persian race became the central and principal development. The Medes, of whom an account has already been given, were a collateral branch of the same stock, and were thus allied by blood with the people who subverted them. These two races, very properly combined in the one ethnic title of Medo-

Persian, were the principal and only noteworthy developments of the Iranian stock.

The time of the early tribal migrations here referred to is lost in prehistoric shadows. It was not until about the eighth century B. C. that the Medo-Persians assume an important part in the affairs of nations. But Berosus gives to the Medes an influence over surrounding tribes as early as B. C. 2400. If such a date be allowed, it would make the Iranians as old a people as the Chaldeans themselves. It will be remembered that tradition assigns to Chaldea a “Median” dynasty among the first that ruled that country. An inscription of Tiglath-Pileser about B. C. 1100, mentions the “country of the Medes,” and the same reference occurs on one of the black obelisks belonging to the ninth century.

The early Iranic race, with its semi-nomadic habits, divided into many branches, ramifying into distant provinces. People of this race mixed with the Susianians on the south and spread westward into Armenia and to the shores of the Ægean. But, as already said, the home and principal seats of this people were and ever remained in Media and the



plateau of Persia. They constituted the vigor and soul of those vast populations, which were bound together for a season by the genius of Cambyses and Cyrus. Bearing this fact in mind, it is appropriate to consider the ethnic character of some of the provincial peoples of the Empire.

Beginning at the south-east with the vast region now divided between Afghanistan and Beloochistan, we find the country appropriated by many tribes, some of which are comparatively unknown in history. Here dwelt the Sagartians, the Cossæans, the Parthians, the Gandarians, the Sattagydiens, and the Gedrosians. The native seats of the Sagartians and the Cossæans were in the western portion of Afghanistan. The former people were much more powerful and widely distributed than the latter. They were scattered in different parts of the country from the Elburz to the borders of Persia, and were a hardy, warlike people. The Cossæans were concentrated about the mountains of Siah-Koh.

Perhaps the most important of the races above mentioned were the Parthians—a people whose courage gave them fame as far west as Rome. Their territory lay south-east of the Caspian, embracing what is now the northern portion of Khorassan. In early times they were nomadic, having no large cities. Their valor in war gave them, in the time of the Empire, a certain preëminence over the surrounding nations. The Parthians were thought to be of Scythic origin. They armed themselves in the same fashion with that barbaric race, and were regarded as the equals of the Scythians in those extraordinary feats of horsemanship and archery for which the latter were so celebrated. The Parthian language also indicated the race-affinity between this people and the Scyths.

The original abode of the Gandarians was Kabul, and the region on both sides of the river of that name. They spread out eastward to the upper tributaries of the Indus, and held all that mountainous district which constitutes the north-eastern corner of the great plateau. The Sattagydiens lived south of the country of the Gandarians, in the district between the valley of the Indus and the

desert. Both of these wild races were brave and hardy, but were less populous and daring than the Parthians. The Sattagydiens occupied that part of Afghanistan not held by the Sagartians, that is, the region between the Ghûzni river and the Indus valley. They were a tribe of about the same numbers and character as the Sattagydiens, though the territory occupied by the latter was much superior to that of the former.

Below the country of the last named nation, in the south-eastern corner of the great plateau, dwelt the Gedrosians. They held the larger part of the modern Beloochistan, a region of few rivers and many mountains. The Gedrosians were regarded by the Persian and Macedonian kings as a people of considerable importance, and the Roman historians and proconsuls frequently refer to them in respectful terms.

Such were the principal half-civilized nations belonging to the eastern portion of the Empire of Darius. It only remains to notice the tribe of the Mysians, who occupied the western part of the Hot region bordering on the sea, and the Persian Scythians, whose bad fame has been more than once referred to in the preceding pages. Their seat was the great plain of Chinese Tartary. On the west lay Sogdiana and Bactria; on the north were the mountains of Tien-chan, and on the east the desert of Cobi. These barbarians were called by Homer the “cheese-eating, mare-milking Scythians.” Herodotus describes them as savages skilled in archery and horsemanship. By Hippocrates they are referred to as gross, flabby, loose-jointed beasts, covered with scattering hair. It was their custom to drink the blood of the first enemy whom they slew in fight. The body of the dead foe was scalped and skinned *à la mode*, and the delicate trophies thus obtained were preserved as souvenirs of the pleasant days of war. When their kings died a great many men and beasts were sacrificed in their honor, while soothsayers and magicians attended to the black arts of the occasion. It was these refined moralists who gave the Persians some of their hottest work, and slew in battle their most illustrious king.

In the plateau of Asia Minor, west of Armenia, lived the Cappadocians. They were called by the Greek historians the "White Syrians." They were a people of the Semitic race, hardy and vigorous, but their character was marred by the foolish superstitions to which they abandoned themselves. They built many temples, the most famous being that of Comana, dedicated to the goddess Ma, the Bellona of the Romans. The high-priest of the nation was a dignitary second only in honor to the king, whom he greatly influenced in affairs of state.

On the other side of the river Halys dwelt the Phrygians, one of the most ancient nations of Asia Minor. They are thought to have been of an Iranian origin, and thus to have been allied by blood with the Medes and Persians. Their ancient king was the mythical Midas, who turned whatever he touched into gold. In the time of the Persian Empire the Phrygians were regarded as one of the most progressive and cultured peoples in the western dominions of the great kings. Before this time they had been subdued by the Lydians, and when in their turn they were overthrown by the Persians, the kingdom of Phrygia went to the new master from beyond the Tigris.

Of the cities of the Empire many have already been described in the preceding Books. Among those which have not yet received any extended notice, the greatest was PERSEPOLIS. This was the capital of Persia Proper in the times when under the Achaemenian kings that country held the leadership of Western Asia. The city was situated thirty-five miles north of the modern Shiraz, in the plain of Merdasht, near the confluence of the rivers Medus and Araxes. This spot, surrounded by lofty mountains, is one of the most beautiful situations in the world. The plain is well-watered by the two rivers Bendamir and Pulwar, and is fruitful to luxuriance. After the removal of the government from PASARGADE, the ancient capital, in the time of Darius Hystaspis, Persepolis became the seat of the Empire until conquest and ambition carried the great kings to Susa and Babylon.

In modern times all that remains of Persepolis is a ruin, but from it has been

gathered a fair idea of the magnificence of the ancient city. Over a considerable portion of the plain the broken columns and crumbling architraves of the once splendid capital lie scattered. On every hand is the evidence of the massiveness and solidity and grandeur which characterized the buildings of the Persians. Near one of the mountain spurs, projecting somewhat into the plain, are the ruins of the great palace of Xerxes. The basement is still intact. The platform is one thousand five hundred feet in length and nine hundred and thirty-six feet wide. Three of the sides are supported by walls of great strength, and the fourth abuts against the hill. The basement is composed of three elevations or terraces, the middle one being over forty feet in height. The details of this great palace will be hereafter noticed in connection with the Architecture of the Persians.

In the hillside near the ruins of the city are the celebrated rock tombs of the kings. One of them still bears the inscription of Darius Hystaspis. About two miles north of this interesting locality are the remains of one of the fortified gates of the city, grand and massive. In wealth and population Persepolis was, next after Susa, the greatest city of Western Asia east of the Tigris. It was destroyed in the time of Alexander of Macedon, and after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes is no longer mentioned among the towns of Persia.

SUSA, the capital of Susiana, was called the "Lily."<sup>1</sup> It was the lily of the Empire, one of the residences of the kings, and the chief treasury of the kingdom. It was situated between the Choaspes and the Coprates rivers in one of the most beautiful spots in the Persian dominions. The city was walled after the manner of Babylon, and had a circumference of twenty miles. It was founded by Tithonus, the father of Memnon, and became noted at an early day for its splendor and wealth. Here it was, in B. C. 325, that Alexander the Great celebrated his marriage with Parysatis, using the treasures of the city with a liberal hand in honor of his nuptials.

<sup>1</sup>The Hebrew word *shushan*, from which Susa is derived, means *a lily*.



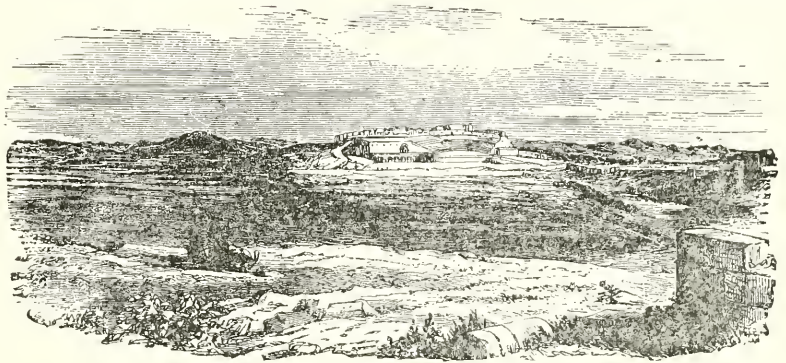
It is only in recent times that antiquaries have succeeded in establishing beyond question the site of the ancient capital.

The most important cities of Asia Minor were **EPHESUS**, **SARDIS**, and **MILETUS**. The last named was the capital of the province of Caria, and was, in the times of the Hellenic ascendancy, a member of the Ionian confederacy. The town was situated on a headland or promontory opposite Mycale, and commanded the bay, into which flowed the river Meander. The builders of the city were Carians and Cretans. The leader of the latter was named Miletus, and from him the town took its appellation. At a later date numbers of Greek traders and colonists settled in the place and gave it its commercial importance. Perhaps no other city on the shores of the *Ægean* carried its trade and settlements so far or prospered so greatly as did Miletus. It became the envy of surrounding nations. The Lydians twice made unsuccessful war upon this maritime metropolis, and not until Cræsus led his army against it did the stronghold succumb. Then for a brief space the city was a Lydian trophy, until Cyrus came into the West and swept all within his grasp.

The city of **SARDIS**, capital of Lydia, was situated on the river Pactolus, near the confluence of that stream and the Hermus, about forty-five miles east from Smyrna. It was one of the most ancient cities of Western Asia. The name is mythological, and is thought to have been given in honor of the Syrian Sun-god. The city was already famous at the time of the composition of the Homeric poems, in which there are many references to the Lydians and their capital. The site was specially favorable to the foundation of a city. Here, from the hills of Mount Tmolus and Mount Sipylus, the river brings down its sands of gold. From no other place in all

Asia could the precious dust be so easily and plentifully gathered. In the time of Cræsus, Sardis was regarded as one of the richest cities in the world, and her fame has been coëxtensive with history. The site is marked at the present day only by a few ruins, of which the most important are the still-standing walls of the ancient acropolis and the remains of a great amphitheater, cut partly in the side of a hill.

**EPHESUS**, like Miletus, was a member of the Ionian confederacy. It was situated near the mouth of the river Cayster, and was said to have been founded by the Amazons. From a very early date it was a place of great prosperity. In the way of fame it claimed to be the birthplace of Homer. More substantial

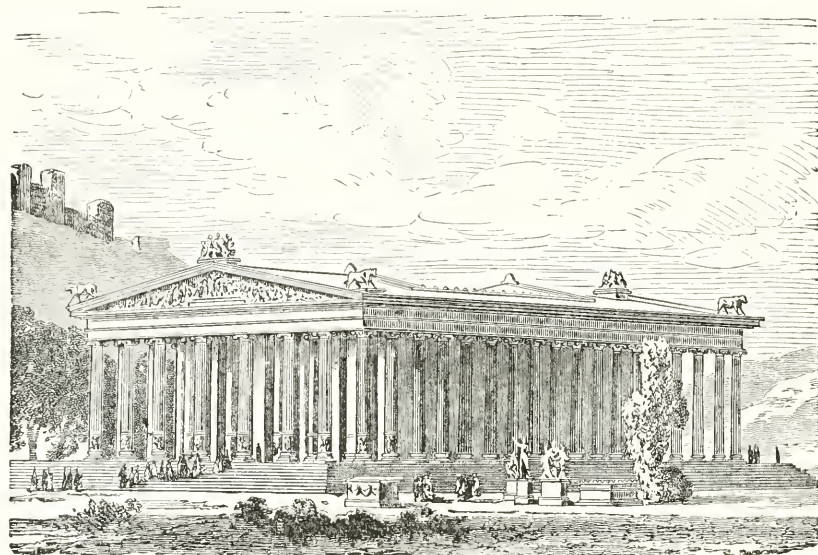


MILETUS.

was the distinction of the Ephesians in claiming Heraclitus, Hermodorus, and Parrhasius, all of whom were born in this city. The tutelary divinity of the place was Diana, whose great temple was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It was enlarged and restored on seven different occasions, the expense being met by contributions from all Asia. On the night of the birth of Alexander the Great a certain slave, named Erostratus, in order to immortalize himself by perpetrating a capricious crime, set fire to the magnificent structure, and it was burned to the ground. When Alexander was grown to years he offered to rebuild the temple on condition of receiving its name, but this was refused, and the Ephesians themselves undertook the task of restoration, which was not completed for two hundred and twenty years.

The temple of Diana was the chief glory of the city. The style was Grecian. The length of the ground-plan was four hundred and twenty-five feet and the breadth two hundred and twenty feet. The structure was thus four times as large as the Parthenon at Athens. The statue of the goddess was one of the finest works of art ever produced. It was wrought of ivory and gold, and was a marvel of costliness and beauty. The temple was decorated with sculptures by Praxiteles

peoples of Western Asia and the northern parts of Africa has been attempted. Sketches of considerable length have also been presented of those fundamental facts in geography and climate upon which the dispositions and genius of nations are so largely based. A summary of the prevalent animals and plants and fruits of the various countries has been given to the end that a just estimate may be made of the means of subsistence and the manner of life in those ancient times when



TEMPLE OF DIANA AT EPHESUS, RESTORED.

and one of the masterpieces of Apelles. A representation of the temple was stamped on the coins and medals of the city. Next among the wonders of Ephesus was the great theater, of which a good portion has been exhumed, and is still well preserved. It was a vast circle of stone rising seat on seat, until the capacity was sufficient to accommodate fifty thousand persons.

In the course of the preceding Histories of Egypt, Chaldea, Assyria, Media, Babylonia, and in the present Book on Persia, a pretty full delineation of the race-character of the

the relations of man with the animal kingdom were so much more important than they are to-day. Descriptions also have been presented—some brief, some more ample—of the leading cities of antiquity, those vast aggregations of humanity which, in the absence of a vigorous and intelligent country populace, really constituted the ancient state. It will

not, therefore, be necessary hereafter to refer so often or so extensively to the above-mentioned primary facts in civilization, but rather to give a larger relative importance to the actual movements of human society, taking it for granted that the ethnic, geographical, and climatic conditions and surroundings of the people under review are sufficiently understood. In entering upon the history of the Greeks and Romans it will again be desirable to note the external conditions by which these peoples and the other races of Europe have been affected in habits, manners, and deeds.



CHAPTER XXIX.—ARTS AND SCIENCES.



**A**MONG the peoples of Western Asia, the Persians, after the Babylonians and the Ninevites, stand first in architectural skill. For a long time their merits remained unnoticed or unacknowledged. The remote geographical position of Persia, lying beyond the Zagros, prevented the Greek traders and historians from obtaining personal information respecting the artistic achievements of the subjects of Cyrus and Cambyzes. Nor, is it unlikely that at a later date, when in the times of Alexander a better knowledge of the architecture and sculpture of the Persians became diffused in the West, there was a twinge of jealousy in the Greek writers when they came to speak of works that might rival those of their own country. Neither Herodotus nor Xenophon ever visited Persia, and the references to architecture made by Ctesias, who dwelt for seventeen years at the court of Susa, are few and meager. At the time of the overthrow of the Empire by the Macedonians, the wrath of Alexander was loosed against the palaces and cities of his foes, and the pride of the land was in a great measure extinguished by the fagot. Nevertheless, the ruins that were left behind and the occasional accounts of the Greek authors have furnished sufficient data from which to derive a tolerable notion of Persian art at the epoch of the Achæmenians. Indeed, in modern times more attention has been given by travelers and antiquarians to the remains of Persepolis than to those of Babylon and Nineveh.

As in most of the ancient kingdoms, so in Persia, the grandest display of architectural skill was in the construction and decoration of royal palaces. Owing to the purer and simpler religious doctrines of the Persians, their temples were relatively less grand and less numerous than those of the Mesopotamian nations and the Egyptians. After the palaces,

the most striking works of the Empire were the tombs which the great kings, with feelings, no doubt, akin to those of the Pharaohs, built for their final abodes. It is, then, to the houses of the kings—living and dead—that we must turn for our knowledge of the style and character of the building arts of the Persians.

There are in Persia Proper the remains of two great palaces. One stood within the walls of Persepolis, and the other in the immediate vicinity of the city. The latter, which was the great edifice to which the torch was applied by the orders of Alexander, is the best preserved ruin in the country, and is in its present state sufficient, under careful examination, to give a fair idea of the original edifice. It is built on a raised platform, after the manner prevalent in Assyria and Babylonia. The exact philosophy of such a method has never been ascertained. Perhaps the ideal consideration was merely the elevation of the king's house to a level from which the monarch might look down on his people. There were also certain physical advantages to be gained from the high situation. In those countries where the summer heats were excessive, the king's halls would have a cooler breeze than in the plain. The elevated position was also more defensible. In some countries, as in Babylonia, there were many ills and pests which were avoided in a measure on the high platform where stood the house of the king. Here the miasm of the lowlands was not felt. Here the insects and vermin which plagued the people of less favored situations were kept at bay by the perpendicular—sometimes jutting—walls and solid masonry of the basement.

The platform of the great palace just outside of Persepolis was built of massive blocks of hewn stone. These were held together by strong clamps of iron. The blocks were purposely cut of different shapes and sizes, and were fitted together according to a plan which

contemplated strength and solidity. The outside of the wall, which was in the lowest part twenty feet in height, was smooth and perpendicular. The ground plan was a rectangle, the dimensions of which have been given in the preceding chapter.<sup>1</sup> On the north side, however, the native rock of the mountain spur, against which the platform abuts, was used as a part of the substructure, and this end of the wall is set at an angle to the other sides of eighty degrees instead of the right angle, which measures the remaining corners. The surface of the wall is purposely broken at intervals with certain angular projections and recesses, after the same style noticed in the basement stories of the palaces at Babylon and Nineveh.

The platform consists of a series of terraces, three of which are still seen. The lowest of these is on the south side. It has an elevation of twenty feet, is eight hundred feet in length and one hundred and eighty feet wide. The northern terrace has much greater dimensions, being thirty-five feet high, and having a breadth of about five hundred and fifty feet. The central terrace is still more grand, being forty-five feet in height. The length and breadth, however, are no greater than that of the northern elevation, being respectively seven hundred and seventy and four hundred feet. It was upon this central terrace that the palace proper was reared.

The ascent to the great platform was made by a system of staircases so massive and grand as to excite just wonder, even at the present. The broadest and noblest of these ascents is on the west side of the elevation near its northern end. The stairs composing the flight are of solid stone. They are of two sets, and are built at right-angles to the wall of the platform. At the first landing they diverge to the right and left, and then converge to a common landing on the upper level. The steps are very broad and low, being no more than three or four inches in height. Modern travelers ride up and down them without difficulty, the breadth of the flight being sufficient to allow of ten horsemen abreast. The ancient world has bequeathed to the modern

no other example of a stairway so massive, so simple, so grand, so enduring.

The second ascent is on the north front of the second terrace leading to the summit. It consists of four flights of steps, two of them being central, and the other two distant about sixty feet on either side. The width of this second flight is sixteen feet, and the entire length of the staircase two hundred and twelve feet. The ascent is as gentle as in the flight on the western front of the lower platform described above, the elevation being at the rate of thirty-one steps in ten feet, or a little less than four inches to the step.

The chief difference between the two staircases is that the lower one on the west is perfectly plain, being composed of broad slabs of hewn stone laid with a solidity of adjustment which time has been unable to disturb. The faces of the second stairway, however, are covered with sculptures, the most interesting of any found among the relics of Persian greatness. One of the chief of these works is a relief of a lion devouring a bull, the figures being executed with great spirit. At the observer's left as he ascends the steps are eight colossal Persian guards, who stand sentry over the approach to their royal master. They are armed with spear and sword and shield, and are executed in a style worthy of the chisels of Greece. Another row of smaller figures, carrying the bow and quiver, stand in another part of the ascent, and though less striking are equally artistic. Further on, the wall was divided into three horizontal bands, each of which was occupied with an array of figures. Those in the upper band are nearly destroyed, but in the lower two divisions the sense of the work can be easily made out. In the middle band a large number of subject peoples are bringing (by their representatives) their tribute to the great king; while in the lower band the courtiers and officers of the monarch, arranged in rank according to their several dignities, are conducting the ceremonial of the court. In three different parts of the stairway slabs are left for the evident purpose of receiving inscriptions, and on one of these, written in Old Persian, are the following memorable words:

<sup>1</sup> See Book Sixth, p. 316



“XERXES, THE GREAT KING, THE KING OF KINGS, THE SON OF KING DARIUS, THE ACHÆMENIAN.” Thus is removed all doubt as to whose royal halls opened at the landing of these stairs, or under whose auspices the great palace was reared.

On the top of the terraces are the ruins of what were once the most splendid edifices in all Persia. It appears from the remains that the summit was not occupied by one continuous palace of great proportions, like the Louvre, but that no fewer than *ten* separate and distinct buildings were erected on the platform. One-half of these were structures of large dimensions, and the remaining five of but moderate size and importance. Four of the larger buildings were upon the summit of the central terrace, while the fifth of the first class stood at some distance between that elevation and the foot of the hill. Of the four structures on the central platform three were palaces consisting of sets of chambers and apartments suitable for the royal residence, but the fourth was an open Hall of Pillars of great extent and beauty, designed, as is believed by antiquarians, for the Audience Hall of the kings. The three palaces were the abodes of Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes-Ochus, by whose architects they were no doubt respectively built. The House of Darius stood near the western edge of the elevation, between the Hall of Audience and the House of Artaxerxes. The ground-plan measured one hundred and thirty-five feet in length and about one hundred feet in breadth. It was the most elevated of all the buildings on the terrace, having the foundation fifteen feet higher than the level of the platform and five feet higher than the floor of the House of Xerxes. This difference in elevation, however, was perhaps more than compensated by the greater height of the buildings bearing the names of the later kings. The House of Darius is believed to have been but one story high, and to have measured in altitude no more than twenty-five feet. The whole building was comparatively simple, suggesting in design and execution the severe work of the early architects of Greece. The sculptured stairway was the most ornamental part of the

edifice, the other parts being nearly devoid of decorations. By comparison the palace was of much less dimensions than those built by the kings of Nineveh: it was the chaste solidity and classic execution of the work rather than the size of the structure that gave fame to the edifice in which Darius planned the subjugation of the Greeks.

The remaining two palaces, those of Xerxes and Artaxerxes-Ochus, were larger and more elaborate. The latter is a complete ruin, inasmuch that no adequate idea of its style and details can be obtained. The former is still preserved in outline, from which it is known to have been a reproduction of the architecture of the palace of Darius. The great hall in this edifice was eighty feet square. In the portico were two rows of pillars, six in a row. Around the hall were the royal apartments in which the king and his household and officers had their abodes. These apartments were—unlike those of the Babylonian palaces—roofed over, the roofs being supported by rows of columns. The whole structure was thrown back to the rear edge of the terrace, so that the open space, instead of being distributed around the building, as in the case of the palace of Darius, was all thrown to the front. In the matter of ornamentation, as determined from the sculptures of the stairways, there is a marked change in taste from the style of the older buildings. In the halls and passages of the House of Xerxes the figures, instead of representing heroic combats, in which bulls and lions and the king himself are seen struggling for the mastery, depict the attendants of the monarch bearing viands and passing to and fro in such service as clearly belonged to a luxurious and sensual court.

In addition to the main buildings which crowned the great platform, it supported four gateways, which covered the approaches to the various palaces. It appears that these were a kind of guard stations, where sentries were posted to hold at bay any who might unduly come into the presence of the king. The largest one of these gateways stood opposite the center of the landing-place before the main stairway which led to the summit of the

platform. The structure was a great square, measuring eighty-two feet on each side. The walls were of enormous thickness, the roof supported by columns sixty feet in height. There were two portals through which passage must be sought to the space beyond, and these were thirty-five feet high and twelve feet in breadth. The portals were guarded without by colossal bulls, some of them having the heads of men and the wings of eagles, after the style prevalent in Assyria. The massive pillars of masonry in which these marvelous effigies are carved are still in a tolerable state of preservation, and the mythological monsters look out in solemn silence over the ruins of former glory.

It remains to notice briefly the two great pillared halls, which have been pronounced by competent judges to be the most marvelous pieces of architecture ever wrought by artists of the Aryan race in Asia. The first, known as the Hall of a Hundred Columns, was situated about the center of the great platform, rather nearer to the eastern than to the western edge. Here a grand square, two hundred and twenty-seven feet on each side, was laid off and inclosed with a tremendous wall of the uniform thickness of ten and a half feet. The whole space was covered over, the roof being supported by a hundred columns set in ten rows of ten columns each. Each of the four walls was pierced with two grand doorways, which stood facing the corresponding openings on the opposite side, the passage through leading between rows of columns on the right and left. In front of the main structure was a portico one hundred and eighty-three feet long by fifty-two feet in depth, the roof being supported by sixteen pillars, thirty-five feet in height. Between the portico and the main hall were three windows, and in the remaining three sides of the square the walls contained niches, finished above with a peculiar style of fluted ornamentation.

It is evident that the Hall of a Hundred Columns was a place of public ceremonies. All of the sculptures and decorations are of a sort to warrant this conclusion. It was not a place for couches and banquets and for the

idle displays of courtiers, but for the formal dispatch of the important affairs of the Empire. The Achæmenian kings were not merely oriental figure-heads, but energetic rulers, who gave their first hours to business and the rest to relaxation, perhaps to luxury. The representations on the walls of the great hall show the monarch in a victorious struggle against some monster, real or fabulous, or else sitting in state, dispensing orders or receiving ambassadors from foreign lands. In such scenes he occupies the throne, over which is spread a canopy. He wears the crown, and in his right hand bears the golden scepter. Five dignitaries of the Empire stand near by, and on a lower level at a distance are fifty armed guardsmen, standing in files of ten, bearing swords and bows and quivers. On another portal a throne still more elaborate is represented. It is on a raised dais of three stages, the successive platforms being supported by a series of sculptured figures. These apparently represent the natives of the various provinces under the dominion of the Persians. The various costumes are as widely different as the person and features of the wearers. Doubtless these throne scenes, looking down silently from the doors and panels of the great hall, were an actual transcript of what was witnessed almost constantly in the great pillared rectangle, where the Majesty of Persia sat and dispensed his edicts to the nations.

On a different part of the great platform are the ruins of another edifice, still more wonderful than the Hall of a Hundred Columns. This was the structure known as the *Chehl Minar*, or Great Hall of Audience. The space covered by this building was three hundred and fifty feet in length and two hundred and forty-six feet in breadth. Like the Hall of a Hundred Columns, it was a structure the vast roof of which was supported by a system of pillars, which in grandeur and beauty surpassed any thing in the ancient world, excepting only the columnar wonders of Egypt and Greece. The main square in the Hall of Audience consisted of a space of twenty thousand square feet, occupied by thirty-six pillars, arranged in rows of six. On



three of the sides of this principal space were magnificent porticoes, each being one hundred and forty-two feet long by thirty feet in breadth. The structure of these was also columnar, each porch being supported by twelve pillars, placed in rows of six, to correspond with those of the main edifice. The seventy-two columns, thirty-six of which stood in the principal square and the remainder in the porticoes, were all *sixty-four feet in height*. Many of them are still erect, and, with the exception of displaced capitals, present, after the dilapidations of twenty-two hundred years, almost the original appearance. The capitals are of two varieties. The first style consists of two half-griffins facing in opposite directions, or of two bull's heads arranged in the same manner. The other style is more complex, consisting of three parts. The first, which rests on the head of the column, is a lotus-bud; the second, a system of volutes, set perpendicularly; and the third the bull's-head cap already described. The bases of the pillars are bell-shaped, and are for beauty unsurpassed by any in the world. The ornamentation consists of a system of lotus-leaves depending. The columns themselves taper gently to the top, and are fluted through their entire length, the number of flutings being forty-eight or fifty-two in each pillar. The entablature and the grand roof overhead have fallen into indistinguishable ruin.—Such were the magnificent structures which once crowned the summit of the great platform of Persepolis.

The other palaces, to which reference has already been made, were found at Pasargadæ, the ancient capital, at the city of Istakr, and at Susa. Pasargadæ was the city of Cyrus the Great, and nearly all the ruins discovered at that place (now the town of Murgab) perpetuate in some way his name and deeds. The monuments found here are the most ancient in all Persia, and represent the beginnings of that style of palatial structure which gained its full development at Persepolis. The largest single ruin at Pasargadæ presents a ground plan one hundred and forty-seven feet in length and one hundred and sixteen feet in width. This space was surrounded by a massive wall, in the four sides of which were

huge stone doors. On the facing of each portal is this legend: "I AM CYRUS, THE KING, THE ACHÆMENIAN." The building within the inclosure was columnar, though all of the pillars, except a single one, have fallen. This remaining shaft has a height of thirty-six feet. It is a column perfectly plain, with a diameter of three feet and four inches at the base. The stumps of seven of the other pillars remain on the pavement, and these are arranged in rows so as to indicate an oblong structure. In a smaller building of similar style, found at no great distance, the bases of twelve columns have been found as they were originally placed. Besides these ruins the remains of a square tower have been found at Murgab. The structure is of hewn stone, built with great solidity, having projecting corners and a height of forty-two feet. Not far distant is a fourth and last foundation, composed of solid stone carefully dressed and laid immovably in horizontal courses. Some of the facing stones are as much as ten feet in length, and are put into place with artistic exactness. The structure is said by antiquarians to bear a remarkable resemblance to the basement of the Jewish temple at Jerusalem.

At the town of Istakr have been discovered the remains of a ruined palace, dating back to the times of the Achæmenians. The ground plan of the edifice has not been determined. One standing column and the bases of eight others have been found in their original places. Parts of the walls have also been traced by the curious and certain features of the building made out with sufficient clearness to show that the palace was in its architecture of a later date than the edifices of Pasargadæ. The fluted columns, massive portals, and thick walls are more like those of Persepolis than those of the ancient capital.

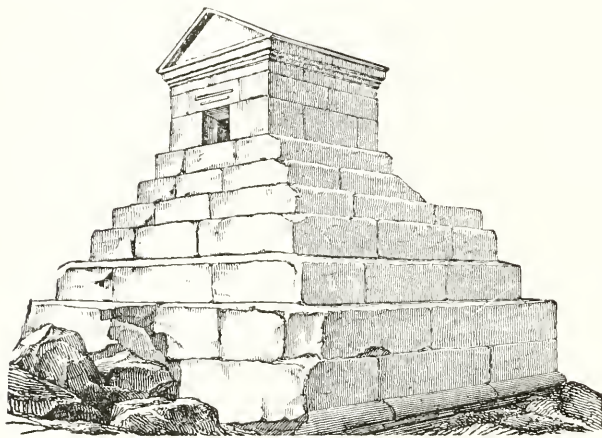
The great palace at Susa, one of the residences of the Persian kings, was built by Darius Hystaspis and afterwards restored by Artaxerxes Longimanus. The site selected was the old rectangular platform of unburnt bricks, which from the earliest times had supported the royal abodes of the kings of Susiana. The view from this summit was one of the most beautiful to be had in the Empire.

The palace front was to the north-west, looking to the distant mountains of Luristan. The royal edifice erected here by Darius was, so far as has been determined by the few remains and by the references of the Greek historians, almost an exact duplicate of the palace of Persepolis: a description of the one will answer for the other.

As already said, the architectural works of the Persians which, next after their palaces, have been considered most worthy of note were the tombs of the kings. Eight of these royal sepulchers have been examined. They are found to be of two kinds; the one being a structure built in an open space, and the other an ornamented chamber carved in

in each of its other dimensions. There is little doubt that within this marble crypt, in a coffin of gold, the founder of the Persian Empire was laid in his last resting-place.

The rock-tombs—those carved in the hill-sides—are more elaborate by far than the one just described. Four of this kind have been discovered in the face of the mountains skirting the valley of the Pulwar, and three have been found in the vicinity of Persepolis. The hill-front selected by the builders was first hewn to a smooth surface. This was then divided into three horizontal sections, the central one being much broader than the lower and upper ones. The lower section remained without ornamentation, being simply hewn plain with definite outlines. The middle section, corresponding to the transverse arm of a Greek cross, contained the tomb proper. The front of this section was adorned with a row of columns, between which the stone was cut away, forming chambers in the hill. In the center a deeper recess was carved, intended to receive the body of the dead. The upper section was highly ornamented, being a kind of architrave covered with allegorical figures, and generally representing in its upper part the king himself in the act of worshipping Ormazd. Such is the character of



TOMB OF CYRUS.

the native rock of the hillside. By far the most conspicuous work of the first class is the celebrated tomb of Cyrus. It is situated near Pasargadæ in a rectangular area now covered with broken pillars, of which there were originally twenty-four. The tomb proper consists of a basement of marble in the form of a pyramid. The lower layer of slabs measures on one side forty-seven and on the other forty-three feet. The pyramid rises to the summit in seven contracted squares, the upper area measuring over twenty feet on each side. Upon the platform thus formed was reared a marble chamber almost exactly the shape of a common house of to-day, having a double sloping roof of marble slabs. The door was in the middle of the end. The inner cell or tomb was eleven feet in length by seven feet

the great tomb of Darius Hystaspis, near Persepolis.

A short distance from this royal burying-ground stood an edifice the meaning of which has not been determined. This is a square tower, built of blocks of marble. The height of the building is thirty-six feet. The ground-plan is a square, measuring twenty-four feet on each side. The corners were ornamented with pilasters, and the faces with niches. In the middle of the north side was a doorway looking towards the tombs. The door leads into a square chamber, which reaches from the level of the entrance to the top of the tower, and is covered with a roof.

Taken all in all, the architecture of the Persians was simple and grand. There appear to have been great regularity of struc-



ture and harmony of design. The general effect was heightened by the elevation which was attained by means of the basement platforms. The columnar feature of the great buildings added a beauty hardly surpassed by the temples of Greece. On the other hand, the Persian buildings—though the fault was not as conspicuous as in those of Babylonia—were little improved in appearance by openings in the walls, or by any device by which surfaces are broken and their monotony relieved. In the way of analogy, the sculptures and other decorations of buildings were like those of Assyria rather than those of Egypt and Greece, though traces of similarity may be seen to the works of the latter countries. But for the reckless fury of Alexander and his followers, much of the architectural glory of the Persians which now lies in heaps of ruin would still bear witness to the ambition and genius of the vigorous people by whom that glory was achieved.

In the matter of Persian sculpture, nearly every thing that may be presented has already been said incidentally in connection with their architecture. The work of this sort consists of figures carved in relief on slabs of stone. Sometimes, as in the case of the tomb of Darius, described above, the artist has displayed his skill on the face of the natural rock. In every case, however, the figures are upon the surface of the material of which they are composed. No separate piece of Persian statuary has been discovered. The colossal bulls and other effigies of the sort which stand guard at the entrances to the palaces are but partially developed figures, only the front of the image being raised from the pillars in which the body is imbedded. Neither clay models nor metallic castings have been found. No specimen of Persian pottery, no carving in ivory or wood, has rewarded the curiosity of the antiquary. Of stamped coins, however, great numbers are in existence, and of engraved gems not a few have been discovered. The colossal bulls, some copied from nature and some mythological monsters having men's heads and eagles' wings, are of a high order of artistic merit. The figures are grand and imposing. Indeed,

there is about them a certain sphinx-like majesty suggestive of the great effigies of Egypt. There is in these works the sublimity of repose combined with the beauty of strength.

After the winged bulls the next class of figures requiring notice are those of a man, generally the king, contesting with beasts. Sometimes the antagonist of the royal person is a wild bull; sometimes, a lion; sometimes, a monster of mythology. These scenes are represented with great spirit and truthfulness, the artist always being careful to give the anticipation of victory to his master, the king. The third series of sculptures are those representing processions of human figures, somewhat like those upon the architraves of Grecian temples. The persons depicted are the courtiers of the king, a retinue of guards, a file of attendants, or an embassy of foreigners bringing tribute and homage to the great king. The fourth kind of sculptures represent the monarch himself, either engaged in some public duty of the government or in devotions to his god. The fifth and last group are those representing animal figures—notably lions and bulls—either singly or engaged in combat. In scenes of the latter sort nature is followed; for the lion kills the bull.

The Persian coins are of great interest. The designs are of many varieties and subjects. Sometimes the impression is a simple medalion of the king, armed and crowned. On one side of some of the coins the figures are raised, and on the other indented. The design in some cases is a galley; in others, the king driving his chariot; in others, a city.

Of the household utensils of the Persians not much is known. The sculptures represent nothing in this line except a few pieces of royal furniture. On the walls of the palace at Persepolis several censers are depicted. The form of a basket is also given, shaped somewhat like a reticule. Goblets and covered dishes are also seen in the hands of servants attending on the banquets. Those who bring tribute-money present the same in a kind of bowl or basin, though these articles were probably brought with the tribute from some distant province.

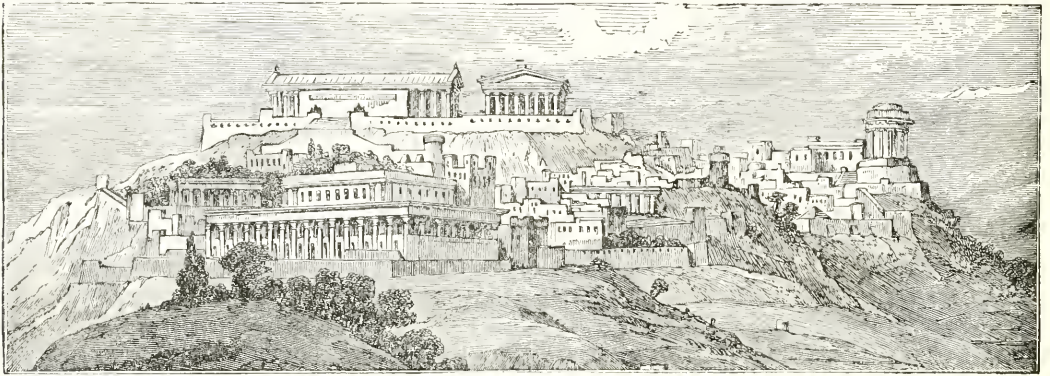
In the matter of personal decorations the

Persians seem to have had the simple tastes peculiar to the Aryan race. The articles were nearly all plain bands of gold. Such were the ear-rings, finger-rings, and bracelets. Collars were sometimes formed by twisting together several bands of the precious metal, but the work displays not much artistic skill. The hilts of swords were made plain, and adapted merely to service, though the shafts of spears were sometimes ornamented with a knob representing an apple or pomegranate.

In the social and economic arts the Persians were not celebrated. In the production of fabrics they were greatly surpassed by the Babylonians and the Phœnicians. Nor was it necessary that the people of the original king-

dom should devote themselves to those industrial pursuits which were so assiduously followed in the subject countries of the Empire.

The leadership of Western Asia was won by the swords of the Persian kings at a time when Babylon, Tyre, Sardis, Borsippa, Damascus, and the cities of India were already famous for their manufacturing industries. These, becoming tributary, were glad to avert the onsets of Persian armies by pouring their treasures into Persepolis and Ecbatana. The soldiers of a warlike country were not very likely to emulate the skill and industry of weavers when they could take for nothing the product of their looms and work-benches. So the manufactures of the Persians never won distinction. Their home fabrics attained a fair degree of excellence; but it does not appear that their goods were ever in demand in foreign markets. The country thus remained dependent for its finer fabrics upon the factories of Babylonia and Kashmeer and Egypt.



ANCIENT SUSA.

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discovered the reason why ancient star-lore flourished in Egypt and Chaldea and lagged in Media and Persia. To this must be added another cause found in a difference of race. The Semitic and Cushite families of men were both by nature and locality contemplative in their habits of thought. The Aryans, on the other hand, were aggressive and restless, prone to excessive activity by day and profound sleep by night. The determination of causes and relations—the essence of science—requires observation, reflection, experiment—conditions foreign to the nature and environment of the Persians. They neither patronized schools nor esteemed intellectual greatness. While learning flourished in many of the provinces of the Empire, while the schools of Borsippa and Miletus were hives of mental activity, Persia Proper neither founded institutions nor appreciated their importance.



## CHAPTER XXX.—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.



HAT kind of people the Persians were can be easily determined from their sculptures. In these the national physiognomy and person are so clearly delineated as to leave no doubt. The figures are sufficiently numerous and varied to satisfy all curiosity respecting the personal appearance and bearing of the subjects of the Achæmenians. The Persian face and general type differ so markedly from the representations of the human form and countenance as delineated in the sculptures of Assyria and Egypt, as to be unmistakable even by amateurs in ethnic peculiarities. The remains of Persepolis also present us with many figures of foreigners done by native artists, and the truthfulness of such work furnishes good ground for belief that they were equally—perhaps more—faithful in carving the features and form of their own countrymen.

In stature the Persians were rather tall. They differed not much in form from the typical European. They were not so heavy and strong-muscled as the Assyrians, but surpassed them in agility and freedom. Their features were striking and regular. The expression was mild, vivacious, benignant—in no case coarse or brutal. The head was high and oval, and (if we may credit Herodotus) the skull was much thinner than that of other peoples.<sup>1</sup>

As far as it is possible to generalize on such a subject, it may be averred that the Persians were witty and vivacious. They seem to have had neither the sedateness of Egyptians nor the meditative habits of the Babylonians. Their sculptures and architecture show that they had the artistic fancy, though in a less degree than the Greeks. It

was, however, in state-craft and war that the intellectual superiority of the people was best illustrated. In these respects the Persian genius was conspicuous. The ability of the Achæmenian kings in conducting the affairs of a great Empire which they had conquered—an Empire composed of heterogeneous populations widely scattered and speaking diverse languages—can in no way be questioned; and their warlike spirit was such as to give them for a considerable period an unequivocal ascendancy over all Western Asia. Even in their great combats with the Greeks it was discipline rather than courage that gave to the latter their victories.

What were the literary—especially the poetical—abilities of the ancient Persians we have no means of knowing. It is not likely that in this manner their imagination found much relief or pleasure. It is true that the Persian poet Firdusi, who flourished in the latter half of the tenth century, has ascribed to his countrymen of ancient times the possession of sentiments and passions kindled with poetic fire. But this perhaps is like the ascription of epic enthusiasm to the Gaël in McPherson's *Ossian*—to be taken with many grains of allowance.

In the heroic virtues the Persians were hardly inferior to the Greeks and Romans. They believed that destiny pointed to them as the conquerors of the world. Under this inspiration, they went to battle with the rash courage of crusaders and met death with the indifference of the Moslems. It was believed by the great kings that they *ought* to go to war. It was the precedent of the Empire to conquer, and when opportunity was wanting, when the energies of the people seemed to be turned to pursuits less daring and dangerous, the monarchs felt that the Achæmenian star was waning in the heavens. The valor of the Persian soldiery will be amply illustrated in the chapter on the military and civil history of the nation.

<sup>1</sup>The Father of History accounts for this fact on the theory that the Persian skull was protected by a head-dress.

Of moral qualities the most conspicuous virtue of the Persians was—as it is of any people who possess it—their love of truth. This trait in the national character was so noted as to become proverbial in both Asia and Europe. The praises of the Greek historians—themselves the literary exemplars of a people who too frequently in their conduct hovered along the bogs of falsehood, not to say the abysses of perfidy—are not stinted with respect to the sterling character of Persian truthfulness. Herodotus declares that the three principal precepts of Persian education were, “to ride, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth.” The last injunction was incorporated in the national religion. Ahura-Mazdão was known and worshiped as “the Father of Truth.” In the best parts of the *Zendavesta* the practice of truth is inculcated as the basis of all conduct acceptable to the immortal gods.

This element of character was all the more conspicuous in the Persian race when contrasted with the lying and treacherous habits which were shamelessly illustrated in the career of most of the oriental nations. It was only in the later times of the Empire, when the effects of luxury had told disastrously on the moral character of the race, that the Persians imbibed the habit of intrigue and treachery, and even then, perhaps, only as employing the same weapons used by their enemies. In the early times a rigid adherence to truth was practiced in the affairs of life, from the dealings of peasants and masons to the treaties of the king. Even a promise obtained on false information or under false pledges was faithfully observed.

It is said that the Persian love of truth was so marked as to lead the people to the avoidance of debt. It was conceived that the debtor was frequently placed in such relations of dependence as to encourage in him the practice of equivocation and falsehood. Therefore it was better to avoid the obligation. Therefore, in the market-place, it was better to use few words and plain. Therefore it was better, in all manner of communication, to be straightforward in speech, so that human conduct might be easily and sincerely fathomed

to its bottom motives and impulses. It may be safely averred that in respect of this high species of morality the earlier Persians gave a fairer example than any other people of the ancient world.

Combined with these high traits of character were others of a different sort. Like most strong races, the people of Persia were given to self-indulgence. Great strength and great hunger are concomitants in human character. If the possessor have not learned the lesson of restraint, strength will display itself in violence, and hunger in excessive gratification. The hunter and the soldier are not likely to be reserved in the banqueting hall. The Persian, moreover, bore his nature on the surface. What he was he was. He spoke out and acted. If he was angered he raged. If he was pleased he laughed. Instead of that exterior calmness so noticeable in the demeanor of the Babylonians, the inner feelings and passions of the Persian flashed out in word and gesture, and his purposes were known to all observers.

Another element in the national character was its servility as it respected the king and the court. This amounted to a kind of abasement in the presence of power quite inconsistent with the otherwise erect attitude of the people. The paradox thus presented of a union in the same race of qualities so opposite as dignified self-assertion and crouching servility can only be explained in the light of the age and the then political condition of the world. At a time when the state was a necessity and the king was the state; in an epoch when those political institutions by which in modern times the will of the people finds so easy an utterance had no existence and could have none, the conditions of despotism, with its correlative, a servile spirit, were natural and perhaps inevitable. Every age is to be judged by its own criteria, and not in accordance with principles whose reign has not yet been ushered in. The government of Persia was absolute, and the governed patiently bowed to the political necessities of the age. The citizen became the sycophant. The king acted without limitation. Whom he would he kept alive and whom he would he slew.



Turning to the outward usages and manners of the Persian people, and beginning with their customs in war, we find them to be in close affinity with the Medes. Like the latter, the Persians placed their chief reliance on the infantry and cavalry wings of the army, and paid little attention to chariots of war.<sup>1</sup> The foot soldier was clothed in a close-fitting leathern tunic, reaching to the knees and the wrists. The legs were tightly encased in trousers, also of leather. The feet were covered with high shoes, which joined the leggins at the ankles. The head was protected by a round felt cap, projecting in the front and rising above the scalp. The waist was bound with a double girdle, from which, on the right side, hung the short Persian sword. The other weapons were a spear and a bow and quiver. The spear-shaft was about six feet in length, and the head was flat, with a ridge on each side down the middle. The bow was about four feet long, and was swung perpendicularly in front of the left shoulder, the cord being up and down the back. The quiver was worn on the same shoulder, and was filled with arrows made of reeds, feathered, and tipped with metal points. Another weapon in use by footmen was the battle-axe, but this is rarely shown in the sculptures. The sling also is occasionally seen, besides being mentioned by Strabo and Xenophon as a part of the Persian weaponry. The missiles shot from slings were pebbles.

The defensive armor of a common foot soldier was a shield of wicker-work. It was in shape a sort of half-cylinder, as long as the soldier's body, and set or carried upright before him in battle. From behind this protection he discharged his arrows. Both Herodotus and Xenophon mention the coat-of-mail as a part of the defensive armor of Persian infantry. It was composed sometimes of metallic scales or plates arranged like those of the shell of an armadillo, and sometimes

of a quilted linen corselet after the style of those worn by the soldiers of Egypt.

In the times of the founding of the monarchy the weapons offensive and defensive of horsemen were almost identical with those of the foot. In the later tactics of the Empire, however, a new style was adopted. The cavalryman was armed with a javelin, and this became his principal weapon of attack. It was a short, strong shaft of wood, barbed with a point of iron. Each soldier carried two of these darts, one of which he discharged in the onset and retained the other for the encounter. The cavalry were also armed with knives and short swords like those worn in the other branch of the service. In the way of defensive armor the horsemen were clad in coats-of-mail and helmets and greaves, and were thus protected at every point. The shield was for obvious reasons dispensed with, being a useless and cumbrous impediment.

Not only the soldier himself, but, as only second in importance, the horse which he rode was protected with armor. The mail was of the same description as that worn by the rider. The horse's head was guarded by a frontlet, and his neck and breast by metallic plates. Even the legs were defended against the missiles of the foe, so that the whole animal was as thoroughly encased as his master. Besides the dragoons, who constituted the main branch of the cavalry service, there was a light-horse wing to the Persian military organization, the business of which was to skirmish with an approaching enemy or to hang upon the flanks and annoy a retreating army. Taken all in all, the constitution and discipline of the forces were such as to secure rapidity of movement and adroitness of manœuver rather than that forceful and resistless execution which was secured by the phalanx of the Macedonians.

On two great occasions in Persian history, namely, in the battles of Cunaxa and Arbela, the scythe-bearing war-chariots were effectively employed, though, as a general rule, these formidable engines were more terrible to the imagination than to the other senses of an army. The long curving blades, which projected from the hubs of the chariot wheels,

<sup>1</sup> Sooner or later every nation adapts its weaponry to the field of service. The war-chariots of antiquity could never have been thought of in a country of hills and gorges. Only in the Mesopotamian plains, the Syrian deserts, and the flatlands of the Egyptian Delta could such ponderous implements have come into use.

were sufficiently dangerous when they could be got against the enemy, but there was the rub; for what with frightened or wounded horses, and what with a chasm in the ground or a slain charioteer, not much was to be apprehended from those military mowing-machines of the ancients. If the battles of antiquity had always been appointed to take place in the Babylonian brick-yards, and if the soldiers had been rooted like wheat stalks to the earth, then perhaps the execution of the scythe-bearing chariots would have been equal to the expectancy.

It appears, however, that the chariot was put to a very rational and important use in the movements of the Persian army. In such vehicles the king (if he commanded, as was generally the case) and the princes of the Empire had their station in battle. The generals and leaders of the army were thus made conspicuous. A sudden impulse was no doubt given to the onset by the apparition of royalty rumbling by and shouting his commands from the chariot of Ormazd.

The general idea of a Persian battle was to keep the best in front. In the later times of the Empire, when war-chariots were introduced, it was customary to place them in advance of the rest of the forces. First of all, it was the plan to send this alarming engine against the foe. In the rear of the chariots, and occupying the center of the field, was the main army of infantry. This was arranged in squares, so placed as to support each other. The front lines were held by the picked troops of Persia, they being considered most valiant. The supports were the less reliable soldiery of the provinces, foreigners, auxiliaries. The cavalry was arranged on the two wings, and was generally intended to operate on the flanks of the enemy. In the beginning of an engagement, the squares advanced to within striking distance of the adverse lines. Here there was a halt, the Persians planted their shields on the ground and began a discharge of arrows upon the foe. In the rear the other troops shot clouds of darts and other missiles over the heads of the front ranks. If the enemy's lines were broken, the cavalry bore down on the wings and completed the

discomfiture. If, however, he stood courageously and came to a conflict hand to hand, then the Persians drew their swords, and in a short time either scattered their antagonists or were themselves put to flight. When the lines broke there was generally a rout. There was little thought of regaining by valor or strategy a lost battle. There seems to have been but a sorry notion of that kind of courage which recovers itself and snatches victory from defeat.

The Persian kings depended mainly for success upon superior numbers. They augmented their forces to the greatest possible extent. In the battle-field the squares were arranged one behind the other to a great depth, so that the lines in front might feel the double impulse of support and of actual pressure forward. Besides this strength of the mass the great numbers of the Persians enabled them to spread beyond the wings of any ordinary army that might oppose them, and to surround and close in upon the flanks of the enemy. When victory inclined towards the standard of the king then the cavalry became especially formidable. The dextrous Persian horsemen, skilled in every species of maneuver, hovered in clouds around the retreating army, swooping down in perpetual onsets, until the enemy was completely worn out and scattered.

In the matter of stratagem the Persian commanders exhibited some skill. As early as the founding of the Empire, we find Cyrus the Great, in his war with the Lydians, employing an array of camels merely to terrify. In the front of the plain of Arbela, Darius Codomanus had the ground sown with the tribulus, or three-spiked iron ball, as a means of preventing or defeating the charge of the Greek cavalry. Nor were the usual ruses and military devices for deceiving an enemy unknown or unpracticed by the great kings and their subjects. In this respect, perfidiously excepted, the Persians were like the other nations of the East.

It does not appear that generalship was a thing highly esteemed, or could be, under the Achæmenians. In an absolutism of the kind presented by the government of Cyrus and



his successors it was not possible for great generals to flourish. They would have stood in the way of the king. He must himself command. He must have the glory of victory. Still there was in the Persian army a great array of officers, and these were arranged as superiors and subordinates, from the king, who was the commander-in-chief, and who was nearly always at the head of his army in the field, to the humblest captains of the line.

Ranking next to the monarch in authority were a few high officers, eight or ten in number, corresponding to the major-generals of a modern army. After these the highest rank was held by the satraps or provincial governors, who generally came at the heads of their respective levies of soldiers. The organization of the ranks was after the decimal fashion. The lowest officer commanded ten men. Ten of these squads constituted a company under a higher officer; and ten of these, what may be called a legion; and ten of these, a division. Several divisions were thrown together and commanded by a general or satrap, so that in all, counting from the king, there were six ranks of subordinate commanders.

Such was the scheme under which the largest armies ever seen on the fields of the world were organized. In times of war every nation in the Empire was expected to furnish its own contingent of troops. These came each with the peculiar uniform and accoutrements of his own country. Albeit, the appearance of a Persian army, marshaled in squares ready for the fight, clad in the various military habits of several scores of nations, and bearing weapons equally varied in character, must have been a scene at once picturesque and imposing. Here were arranged nearly every variety of human kind, from the black Ethiopians of the Upper Nile and the savage Scyths of the North to the fair and well-formed soldiers of Media and Persia.

The campaigns of the Empire were generally planned for the spring and summer. As far as practicable, the winter was avoided as unsuitable for military operations. When the army was in the field, the means of subsistence were carefully attended to. The ad-

vance was made with the baggage and commissary in front. Between this and the first division a space intervened. The main army came afterwards, preceded by a guard of a thousand horse and a thousand foot and the sun-car of Ormazd, drawn by the sacred horses, and having in it the fire kindled from heaven. The emblems of the national faith were thus visibly present to the soldiery, and were as well calculated as any superstitious symbols could be to fire the hearts and nerve the arms of the host. Next came the king himself, in a car second only in splendor to that of the sun. Around him were his relatives. Then followed another guard like that which went in advance, and after this a body of ten thousand picked Persians, known as the "Immortals." These were infantry, and were succeeded by a like number of horse. Between this division and the great columns composing the mass of the army a space was left of four hundred yards. Then came the great squares of Persians, Medes, and provincials, gathered from all parts of Western Asia. The army thus constituted was able to march about twenty-five miles per day. As the advance continued, requisitions were made upon the inhabitants of the provinces and towns through which the route lay, and many a district was completely exhausted under the enormous drain. Such was the effectiveness of the means employed to provision the army that the rash invasion of Ethiopia by Cambyses furnishes the only example in the history of the Empire in which disaster was precipitated by a failure of supplies.

In the conduct of battle the Persians were more humane than most of the oriental peoples. The beaten enemy was granted quarter, and prisoners were treated with a fair degree of consideration. When conquests were made the rulers of the conquered provinces were frequently retained as provincial governors, or in lieu of their own countries were granted other territories as an appanage. Sometimes captive princes were received into favor at the Persian court, where they were given residence and freedom. Of course, all these favors were contingent upon the submission of the recipients and their loyalty to the new

order of things. In case of rebellion, severe punishments were meted out to the insurrectionists. The leaders were generally put to death in some ignominious and cruel way. The chief aiders and abettors of revolt were likely to share the fate of the principal instigators. It was not often, however, that the wrath of the Persian kings burned so fiercely as to involve the common people of a rebellious province in destruction. In one case, it is said that three thousand Babylonian rebels suffered a wholesale crucifixion at the hands of Darius. To crucify or impale alive was the usual penalty meted out to traitors and rebel chiefs. The people of a country engaged in revolt were frequently punished by transportation into Persia, where they were reduced to the condition of slaves.

The geographical position of Persia was not such as to suggest dominion over the seas. When conquest, however, had given her supremacy over several maritime states, and had taught her the vast importance of ruling by sea as well as by land, an appreciation of nautical skill was produced, which exercised a large influence on the subsequent history of the Empire. It was perceived that Phœnicia, Cyprus, and the islands of the Grecian archipelago, owed their importance to the conquest of the sea. After the Persians acquired control of the Mediterranean, it was but natural that they should concern themselves more than hitherto with the means of maintaining their dominion. To this end the great kings became the builders of docks and the patrons of sailors. The yards of Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Egypt became quickened under this influence. Large fleets were built and equipped, and the seamen of Persia became as skillful as any of that age.

Inasmuch as naval warfare was a conspicuous feature of the contests of several of the great states of antiquity, notably of the Persians, Greeks, Romans, and Carthaginians, a sketch of the war-vessels employed by them will be of interest. The standard ship of all the nations just mentioned was the trireme, or three-oared boat, by which is meant three banks of oars. Several attempts were made by the ancients, but without marked success,

to extend the number of benches and the consequent capacity of the galley; but the quadriremes of the Carthaginians and the quinqueremes of the Syracusans were too unwieldy for naked human strength, and were abandoned in favor of the trireme. The latter was a ship of considerable size, requiring a regular crew of two hundred men. Besides these the vessel was capable of accommodating thirty marines. Of the crew one hundred and eighty sailors manned the oars, and the remaining twenty attended to the other service of the galley. Each oarsman sat on a small seat fixed in the side of the ship, opposite the port of his oar. The oars in each superior tier were arranged obliquely above and behind those of the inferior bank, and each was fastened in the port with a thong of leather. In addition to the propelling force of the oars each galley was, as a rule, provided with a mast and at least one sail. The twenty members of the crew not oarsmen included the captain, or *gubernator*, and his subordinate officers and assistants. The steering was accomplished by means of a rudder at the stern. The vessel in its central part was overlaid with a deck, level with the bulwarks, and on this deck the marines stood and fought.

The trireme was expected to do service not only by bringing a company of armed men against a like company of the enemy, but also as a ram to split and run down the opposing galleys. Each ship was armed with a strong beak, called the *embolus*, projecting straight in front, sometimes above and sometimes below the water-line, and mailed with a shoe of iron or bronze. The beak was finished above in the likeness of the head of some animal real or mythological. The point of superiority in the naval tactics of the times was to drive this beak into the sides of the enemy's galleys, and send them and their crew together down to Neptune. Besides the triremes, which constituted the body of the Persian naval armament, several other varieties of ships, designed for some special feature of the service were employed, but the general plan of them all was that of a galley propelled by oars.

An important use to which the vessels of



the Persians were sometimes put was that of forming pontoons across rivers and arms of the sea. The plan of these boat-bridges was simple. A number of galleys were arranged side by side, the heads up stream. A short space was left between each vessel and the next. Each ship was securely anchored, and then a transverse platform of timbers was laid from bank to bank. Thus was constructed a floating bridge over which the heaviest armies could be transported. The prime importance of structures of this sort will fully appear in the invasion of Greece by the Persians.

The fleets of the Empire were furnished and manned almost exclusively by the subject nations. Each state sent its contingent of ships. The oarsmen were a part of the equipment. The fighting sailors who manned the decks were either Medes or Persians, but they to whom was assigned the less glorious task of toiling at the oars were Phœnicians, Egyptians, Cypriots, Cilicians, Pamphylians, Carians, or Greeks, according to the nationality of the respective vessels.

Passing, then, from the military and naval life of the Persian people to their customs in peace, let us begin with his majesty the king. The ruler of the nation was, under the existing theory of human government, an absolute dictator. His absoluteness was not shorn. Being the representative of Ormazd in the earth, his dignity had a celestial flavor. His right to be king might not be questioned. To look askance at royalty was to be guilty of both treason and impiety. The king's wrath was but a reflex of the anger of heaven and his smile was the sunshine of the world. Every thing pertaining to the person and life of the sovereign must, therefore, be on a scale of magnificence proportionate to his exaltation.

So the king's dress was ample and gorgeous. The richest and most brilliant silk was the material. The royal garment was a robe with ample folds and hanging sleeves. The color was purple and the embroidery of gold. Around the waist was a girdle, and the skirts fell to the ankles. Under this robe was a tunic, also purple in color, but striped with white. On the monarch's feet were high, yellow shoes, buttoned at the front and taper-

ing towards the toe. It was the head-dress, however, which specially distinguished the king from any, even the most exalted, of his subjects. This consisted of a tiara or miter, tall and cylindrical, swelling at the top and ending in a circle broader than the diameter of the cap. This was the monarch's badge by which alike by army and court and people he was denoted and recognized. Around the king's brow and at the base of the miter was the royal circlet, called the diadem. Besides the tiara the monarch was also distinguished by the golden scepter and the parasol, the latter being carried either by himself or an attendant. The scepter was a tapering rod about five feet in length and finished at the smaller end with a bulb in the shape of an apple or pomegranate. When the king appeared in public he bore the scepter in his right hand, perpendicularly in front of his person.

In common with other princes and noblemen the sovereign wore gold ornaments and jewels. His earrings were bands of gold set with gems. His wrists were adorned with bracelets, and his neck with a twisted collar. Besides these decorations he wore a sword of the usual short pattern, not very elaborate in workmanship, but incased in a costly sheath of jasper or lapis-lazuli.

The officers, civil and military, who stood next to the royal person were his charioteer, and five attendants, whose respective duty it was to bear the king's bow, his quiver, his stool, his parasol, and his fan and napkin. The charioteer wore no armor. He merely managed the steeds. The bow-bearer stood behind the monarch, holding the bow in his left hand, ready to be delivered to his royal master. Next to him stood the bearer of the



HEAD OF A PERSIAN KING.  
From a bas-relief.

quiver. The stool-bearer's duty was to assist the monarch as he mounted to his seat in the chariot or dismounted therefrom. Last in the list of attendants were the bearers of the parasol and the fan, who were unarmed and had their stations behind their sovereign, the one to ward off the sun's rays and the other to cool his brow with artificial breezes or to wave away intruding flies from too great familiarity with the majesty of Persia.

Like the Babylonians and Assyrians, the Persians delighted in ointments and perfumes. Frankincense, myrrh, cinnamon, spikenard, cassia, and various gums were used in abundance to regale the senses of the kings and princes. Even on the way to battle the monarch failed not to take with him an alabaster box filled with fragrant oils and extracts. Fiery Mars was thus made the bedfellow of Adonis.

Apart from the personal staff of the king, the principal officers of the court were the steward of the household, the master of the horse, the chief eunuch, the king's "eyes" and "ears—a kind of honorable spies, whose duty it was to find out and report to their sovereign all matters of importance—and the royal secretaries and heralds. A retinue of less dignity included the ushers of the palace, the tasters of the king's food (forsooth it might be poisoned), the cupbearers, the chamberlains, and the musicians. Then came the guards, doorkeepers, huntsmen, cooks, and common servants. Besides this extensive array of officers and attendants there were nearly always resident at the Persian court a large number of foreign ambassadors and visiting princes, together with the king's relatives, favorite nobles, and captives of high rank who had been received into the friendship and trust of the monarch. It is said that as many as fifteen thousand persons were sometimes entertained at the court, and if we may credit Herodotus, the daily expense of the royal tables was four hundred talents of silver. A thousand beasts—sheep, goats, oxen, stags, asses, horses, and camels—were each day slaughtered to furnish forth the feast, and besides these the feathered tribes of half the world were brought under contribu-

tion to satisfy the appetite of the monarch and his banqueters.

As a general rule the king himself ate and drank apart from the guests of the palace. On ordinary occasions he was served in his own chambers, but sometimes a favored few were permitted to feast with him. At the banquet the monarch reclined on a gold-embroidered couch, and was served with the richest food and rarest wines. The guests were generally seated on the floor—after the manner of the times—and were served with less costly viands. People of a lower rank were served in an adjacent chamber, between which and the king's apartments a curtain was drawn, concealing him from view. On a few state days and great festivals the sovereign presided publicly at the banquet of his nobles and officers, and on these rare occasions even vulgar eyes might catch a glimpse of the sovereign of Persia.

After the manner of the East the Achæmenian kings adopted the harem as a part of their domestic economy. In the hardy days of Cyrus and Cambyses the institution was not so fully developed as in later times. With the early kings a seraglio of three or four wives and a moderate retinue of concubines was deemed sufficient. Of these wives one only held the supreme place, and in contradistinction to the rest was called the Queen. She only was permitted to wear the crown, and before her all the rest stood abashed or actually prostrated themselves as to royalty. It appears that even down to the overthrow of the Empire by the Macedonians this redeeming feature of one woman supreme over her rivals, and perhaps so in the affections of the king, was preserved in the social system of the Persian court—the natural and inevitable protest of love over lust. It is not improbable that such queens as Atossa, Amestris, and Statira retained through life an honorable preëminence in the esteem of their lords, and that in their presence and companionship such kings as Hystaspis, Xerxes, and Codomanus may have realized the essential badness of the system which they had inherited. The Persian queen, however, never shared *her* husband's authority: she had *influence*, but no



*power.* The other wives—who must always be selected from noble families—had the title of consort, and were thus in some measure superior to the miserable group of concubines below them. It was, however, a sad and dubious preëminence, which in its nature could bring neither honor nor happiness to those who possessed it.

One important feature of the government, as related to the social system of the Persians, was the influence of the Queen-Mother—should there be one—in the affairs of state. In cases where the queen outlived her lord she did not, to be sure, after his death inherit the crown. That went to her son. But, instead of being retired to a position less honorable than that which she had held during the king's life, she was raised in dignity and influence. She was given charge of the Gynæceum or establishment for the women, and in this important office wielded an authority over the queen, her daughter-in-law. Her son, the king, was as yet, in all likelihood, a youth, and was by no means from under the natural influence of his mother; so that to secure her interest and favor was one of the most vital points in the diplomacy of courtiers and ambassadors. It is not impossible that this ascendancy of the Queen-Mother in the affairs of state and over that native hot-bed of discontent—the Gynæceum—was specially conservative and salutary.

The common service of the harem was committed to the eunuchs. Of these there were great numbers about the court. The king's attendants were largely of this class. They were multiplied as the government became elaborate. From some reason quite inconceivable in modern times, their influence increased. They became a directing power in the state. Many of them were the king's trusted counselors, and were held in high honor. They had in charge the education of the princes of the Empire, and several of them are said by Ctesias to have distinguished themselves as generals in the field. They are represented, however, as being of an intriguing and ambitious disposition, and to have been at the bottom of many court broils and assassinations. In spite of the influence and

distinction attained by this despicable class of beings, it appears that in one respect they were publicly dishonored: in the sculptures of Persepolis not a single figure of a eunuch occurs. Neither they nor any woman—not even the queen—was deemed worthy of the immortality of art.

The Persians recognized seven royal—or at least princely—houses. The members of these constituted the nobility of the Empire. The first of these great houses was the Achæmenian, to which belonged the great kings. This family was, of course, preëminent over all the rest. Each of the princely houses had its own head or chief, and the seven together constituted the body known as the "Seven Counselors" of the king. They had much independent influence. Their right to advise was in virtue of their birth. They might seek the presence of the monarch at any time and in any place except the Gynæceum. At public festivals they sat by right next to the sovereign, and in important business of state they shared in some measure the responsibility of the king's edicts and proclamations—not, however, to the extent of touching upon his absolute and inalienable prerogatives.

The ceremonial of the Persian court was formal and elaborate. He who would have audience with the sovereign must be introduced by the usher of the royal household and must prostrate himself before the king. He who came unannounced was subject to death. The carpet which was laid for the monarch's feet might not be touched by any other. To sit down even unwittingly on the throne was a capital crime. Robes which the king had worn might never be put on by another. In short, every circumstance by which the artificial dignity and elevation of the sovereign might be heightened and maintained was attended to with scrupulous care.

On his part, the monarch was equally burdened with etiquette. He must, for the most part, live and eat alone. He must not be seen. He must not walk beyond the walls of the palace. He must be infallibly consistent, even in inconsistency; for no edict once issued might ever be revoked. The laws of the Medes and Persians were unchangeable.

Fortunate was it for the king that the rigor of precedent was sometimes relaxed in his favor. Royal etiquette permitted him to hunt and to play at games. To the former he gave himself with enthusiasm. It was the pride of the great Achæmenians to be distinguished in the chase. To combat with a lion was a sport worthy of the king. To be victorious over the fiercest and strongest creatures of the desert and mountain was an act worthy to be engraved in stone and in the royal signet with which the edicts of authority were signed. The favorite theme of Persian art is the monarch in his chariot, letting fly his unerring arrows into the vitals of the king of beasts.

Tired of the hunt, the sovereign amused himself at dice. Not for the game only, but for the wager, were the blocks thrown on the royal board. Plutarch is authority for the statement that sometimes as much as a thousand darics were staked on a single throw. Favorite slaves, eunuchs, and women were raffled for and lost and won in the reckless excitements of the kingly gaming-table.

Persian royalty had no literary taste whatever. It is doubtful whether the monarch was an expert reader. His secretary, however, had the duty of reading to him of the current affairs of the kingdom and the history of the past. The examples and fame of preceding sovereigns were thus rehearsed out of a work called the "Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Persia and Media," from which the reigning prince was expected to learn the lessons of emulation and wisdom.<sup>1</sup>

The annals of the common life of the Persian people are meager and unsatisfactory. The state was every thing, and the king was the state. The full light which played upon the throne was rarely turned to the common lot. The sculptures are almost wholly devoted to the illustration of royalty and its attendant circumstances. Something, however, can be made out respecting the manners and customs of the men who composed the armies and built the cities of the great kings.

The Persian people were divided into ten tribes, of which three appear to have been land-owners, three agriculturists, and four nomads or shepherds. Of the land-owning class the principal tribe was the Pasargadæ. The agricultural tribes were the Panthialkei, Derusiei, and the Carmanians. The nomadic classes were the Dai, the Mardi, the Dropici, and the Sagartii. The lines between these various classes were not fixed, as in Egypt, by a distinction of caste, but the various tribes held to a given method of life after the manner of the clan.

The dress of the Persian common people was a cotton tunic and trousers of leather. The head was covered with a felt cap and the waist was belted. High shoes, laced at the front with strings, protected the feet. The richer class wore long robes with hanging sleeves, after the style of the Medes. The caps of the opulent were raised into a tiara, their hands were incased in gloves, and their clothing was embroidered. Nobles generally wore chains and collars of gold—bracelets, ear-rings, and jewels.

The social life of the commons was, like that of the noble and royal ranks, disfigured by the practice of polygamy. There was no actual restriction as to the number of wives. To have a numerous retinue was considered honorable. Especially was it a point of distinction to have large families of sons, and he who could display the greatest number sometimes received a premium from the king. As if the wives were not enough, nearly all men had as a part of their households a train of concubines, and these were generally foreigners, Greek girls being preferred.

The boys of the Persians were educated—if such a word as education may be properly used of the training systems of antiquity—with great care. For the first five years the child was left with the mother and her woman attendants. From that time forth his discipline began. Before dawn he must arise and present himself in a certain place before his master. Here the lad was exercised for a certain number of hours in running and jumping, in shooting with the bow, in slinging stones and hurling the javelin. After two

<sup>1</sup> Rehearsals of the deeds of the dead were given almost daily by the Egyptian priests in the presence of the Pharaoh, for whose benefit the story was recited.



years of this preparatory work he was promoted to the horse. Him he must mount and ride. On his back he must go to the hills and join in the hunt. He must jump on and off while his steed is running. He must discharge his arrows and darts while galloping at full speed. He must heed nor heat nor cold. He must sleep outdoors at night. He must appease the insatiable stomach of boyhood with one meal in two days. Sometimes he must go to the woods and fill himself as best he may with acorns and wild pears. All stimulating and luxurious food was withheld. Whatever conduced to hardihood, to bodily vigor, to endurance, was sedulously inculcated. In the way of ornamental branches he was taught to read. His teachers also gave him a modicum of morals; for he must hear recited some old poems recounting the character and exploits of certain gods and heroes, whom he must revere and imitate. Thus for fifteen years the lad was put through the discipline appointed to youth, and then graduated a horseman and soldier. For such was the aim of life. Indeed, for five years before his graduation the Persian stripling had already been enrolled in the army and was liable to the call of the king.

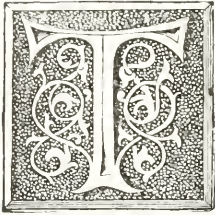
The subjects of the Achæmenians seem to have looked with as much contempt on commercial pursuits as did the feudal lords of the Middle Ages on common industry. They would none of it. Such pursuits tended to effeminate the mind. Artisans and traders were of no reputation. Shops and stores were driven from the respectable parts of towns and cities. Merchants were regarded as intriguers and liars. Manufacturers had no character. True men—valorous and dar-

ing—did not degrade themselves by toiling at those miserable crafts by the practice of which the servile tribes enriched themselves at the expense of their manhood.—Such were the dogmas of industrial morality.

In the later times of the Empire, luxury came in like a flood—and folly came also. Personal vanity learned to display itself in the immemorial way. The lower eyelids must be stained, so that the eyes should appear large and lustrous. Eunuchs must wear false beards and mustaches, and the hair of the dead must supplement the scanty work of nature on the vainglorious skulls of fools. It was high time for the appearance of the Macedonian phalanx.

The penal code of the Persians was on a par with the statutes of many modern countries—the dominant idea being to kill. The fangs of barbarism have their last roots in the law-books of the world. They are the only thing never reformed except by revolution. The theory of the barbaric age is that the cure for crime is punishment. The theory of civilization is that penal measures are among the smallest and least salutary of all the influences to be employed in the eradication of criminal passions and practices. In Persia the penalty of death was recklessly inflicted. Great crimes and small misdemeanors and mere accidents of conduct were all indiscriminately visited with the extreme penalty. To this was added cruelty of execution. Sometimes the head of the criminal was laid on a flat stone and crushed with another. Sometimes crucifixion was employed. Sometimes the condemned was buried alive. The soul of the age was cruelty, and the heart of justice a stone.

## CHAPTER XXXI.—LANGUAGE AND RELIGION.



THE language of ancient Persia was one of the oldest forms of Aryan speech. It was so nearly identical with that of the Medes as to be regarded as the same tongue with merely dialectical differences. After Sanskrit, Persian presents the most primitive type of that great group of languages beginning in the songs of the Vedas and ending in the English book of yesterday. It is thus closely allied with Latin and Greek, Mæso-Gothic, and Anglo-Saxon. Accordingly we find that the known words in Old Persian are nearly always found with but little variation in the speech of the Greeks and Romans, and perhaps in the English of to-day. Thus the Persian *brâtar* is *bhṛâtar* in Sanskrit, *frater* in Latin, *bruder* in German, and *brother* in English. The Persian *durarâ* is *dvâra* in Sanskrit, *thýra* in Greek, *thüre* in German, and *door* in English. The Persian *matâr* is *mâtar* in Sanskrit, *mâtēr* in Greek, *mater* in Latin, *mutter* in German, and *mother* in English. The Persian *pathi* is *panthan* in Sanskrit, *pátos* in Greek, *pfad* in German, and *path* in English. The list might be extended to many scores of words illustrating with certainty the identity of all the Aryan tongues and the true place of Persian as a member of that group.

In the declension of Persian nouns six cases were employed: the nominative, the genitive, the accusative, the vocative, the ablative, and the locative. The following declension of the noun *Mada*, meaning "a Mede," may serve to show the usual case endings and forms of the noun:

SINGULAR.		PLURAL.
N. <i>Mada</i> , . . . . .	a Mede.	<i>Madâ</i> , . . . . . Medes.
G. <i>Madahyâ</i> , . . . . .	of a Mede.	<i>Madânâm</i> , . . . . . of Medes.
A. <i>Madam</i> , . . . . .	a Mede.	<i>Madâ</i> , . . . . . Medes.
V. <i>Madâ</i> , . . . . .	O Mede.	<i>Madâ</i> , . . . . . O Medes.
Abl. <i>Madâ</i> , . . . . .	by a Mede.	<i>Madaibish</i> , . . . . . by Medes.
Loc. <i>Madaiya</i> , . . . . .	with a Mede.	<i>Madaishuva</i> , . . . . . with Medes.

There were several varieties of declension, but the above forms are typical of the case

structure of the language. Adjectives followed the nominal forms in all particulars. The comparative and superlative degrees of adjectives were formed by adding respectively the syllables *tara* and *tama* to the stem of the positive. In rare cases, however, the superlative was formed by adding *ista* to the positive stem—another instance of the radical identity of Persian and English, the *ista* being the same as the English *est*. In counting, the decimal system was employed, though the value of the digit did not depend on its place, as in Arabic numeration, but was absolute, as in the Roman method. The personal pronouns were *âdam* (I), *manâ* (my), *mâm* (me), *ma* (with me); in the plural *vayam* (we), *amâkham* (our), accusative and ablative unknown. In the second person the forms were *tavam* (thou), *taîya* (thine), *turam* (thee), *tuvam* (O, thou), the plural forms being unknown. In the third person, *hauva* (he), *ava hya* (his), *avam* (him), *shaiya* (with him).

Persian verbs had three voices: the active, the middle, and the passive. The middle voice was very nearly identical in its forms with the passive. The verbal moods were the indicative, subjunctive, potential, imperative, and infinitive. The tenses were the present, the imperfect, the aorist, and the perfect, the place of a future tense being supplied by the use of the present subjunctive. The verb *to be* had in the present tense the following forms: *amiya* (I am), *ahya* (thou art), *astiya* (he is); plural, *amahya* (we are),—(ye are), *hatiya* (they are). *I was*, was *aham*, and *he was*, *aha*. The scheme of the other parts of speech—adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions—was made out according to the analogies of the other Aryan languages, and the general rules of syntax were almost identical with those of Latin and Greek.<sup>1</sup>

The Persian alphabet contained twenty-

<sup>1</sup> The absence of the dative case in Persian and other like peculiarities necessitated departures not a few from the principles of Latin and Greek.



three phonetic elements, represented by thirty-six characters. The system of writing was the cuneiform, of which some notices have already been given in the history of Chaldaea. Persia was—and is—the native land of the cuneiform inscriptions. It appears that this style of writing, with characters made up of wedges, was born out of necessity, and the necessity existed in the *materials* chosen in certain countries to contain the records of their deeds and learning. The peculiarity of the cuneiform elements is their rectilinear character. They contain no curves. In those countries in which clay tablets and stone were the materials on which writing was executed, curved lines would naturally be avoided, and even in the primitive stages of the art the writer would reduce his system to right-line strokes. Those nations, on the other hand, that chose papyrus and parchment, and that laid on the characters with a pigment, would prefer the curve as more beautiful, and perhaps more easy of execution. Thus arose in Assyria, Media, Babylonia, and Persia the cuneiform system, and in Greece and Rome the oval style of letters.

All of the extant specimens of Persian writing are done in stone. The rock inscriptions of the times of the Achæmenians are among the most famous in the world. The most noted of these is that executed on the face of the great cliff at Behistun. Here, at the height of three hundred feet above the ground, the surface of the precipice was smoothed over a great space. Pieces of stone were fitted in in those parts where there were breaks and flaws until the whole was reduced to a perfect surface. Then the inscriptions were cut in the face of the rock. The whole was finally covered with a silicious coating to protect the work from the action of the elements. The inscriptions are contained in five great columns, the first four having over ninety lines each, and the fifth thirty-five. The story recorded is the genealogy of Darius Hystaspis and the annals of his reign—what were the provinces of the Empire; how the king put down rebellions and triumphed over his enemies. An effigy of the monarch himself is given in relief. He is armed with a

bow, and his foot is planted on the prostrate form of an adversary. Next in importance to the inscription here described is that on the tomb of Darius near Persepolis. The third in extent is that containing the further history of Darius and Xerxes, on the face of a cliff at the foot of Mount Elwend, near Hamadan. Finally, may be mentioned a second inscription of Xerxes, found near the Persian town of Van.

The characters used in the cuneiform writing are from one-sixth of an inch to two inches in length. They are all chiseled in the surface of stone. The Persians seem not to have adopted the expedient of clay tablets to be first impressed with characters and afterwards burned to hardness. The work of the inscriptions is all executed from left to right, after the manner of all the Aryan nations.

The history of what may be called cuneiform learning is full of interest. The attention of modern Europe was first called to the inscriptions in the year 1618, when Garcia de Sylva Figueroa, ambassador of Philip III., of Spain, copied from the ruins of Persepolis a section of cuneiform writing. He even ventured the expression of his belief that the work was actual writing, perhaps in some dead language. The next traveler to call attention to the inscriptions was Pietro della Valle, an Italian, who in 1622 sent to the antiquarian Kircher a brick inscribed with cuneiform characters. After this it became fashionable to bring or send into Europe specimens of this curious work of the East. More than a century elapsed, however, before any serious attempt to *translate* the Persian inscriptions was made. In 1767, the elder Niebuhr, father of the historian, transcribed from the ruins of Persepolis and brought home to Denmark a considerable portion of an inscription. The extract was published, and the scholars of Europe began to exercise their skill in attempts at translation.

Many, however, still denied that the inscriptions were writing at all. Thomas Hyde, an eminent scholar, declared them to be mere idle fancies of the Persian masons and architects. Professor Witte, of Rostock, thought that they were *the work of worms!* Some de-

cided that the cuneiform characters were talismanic signs, or perhaps a kind of symbolism understood by the priests. Others, in turn, admitting that the work was actual writing, pronounced it Chinese, Cufic, Hebrew, Samaritan, and even Greek.

Meanwhile, the more expert and patient scholars were steadily pursuing the line of investigation marked out at the first by Figueroa and afterwards by Niebuhr. It was not, however, until September of 1802 that Professor Grotefend, then but twenty-seven years of age, presented before the Academy of Sciences in Göttingen the first actual translation of the cuneiform inscriptions. The accuracy of his work was demonstrated both then and afterwards, and a branch of university learning was founded on the great discovery. A review of the patient and ingenious steps in the process by which at last Grotefend succeeded in unraveling the mystery is here forbidden for want of space. His work will be commemorated as long as the Achæmenian kings are known in history.

As it respects the religious system of the Persians, much said in the History of Media might here be repeated. The two peoples were of close relationship in race, and almost identical in language and religion. As already said, the original faith of the country was the nature worship of India, but this did not extend into the period of nationality. When the Medes rose to the ascendancy of Western Asia, the doctrine of Magism, long acknowledged by the tribes whom they subjugated, gradually supplanted the purer beliefs of the people until, as we have seen, a chief cause of that struggle which substituted the Persian for the Median ascendancy was the hostility of Cyrus and his people against the apostasy of the Medes from the faith of their fathers. That faith was the system of reformed religion taught and established by the great apostle of the Medo-Persic race.

ZOROASTER, the founder of this reformed faith, was a native of Bactria. Concerning his career there is much that is still obscure. He was the son of Pourushaspa, who lived in the time of King Vistaspa, in whom the young Zoroaster and his doctrines found a

patron and friend. Until recently the King Vistaspa, or Hystaspes, has been identified with Darius Hystaspes, which identification would place the birth of the Bactrian prophet in the sixth century B. C. An examination of the Zendavesta, however, proves beyond a doubt that the epoch of Zoroaster must be referred to a period much more remote. The archaic language of the bible just referred to could never have belonged to the times of the Achæmenian kings. So the supposed identity of Vistaspa and Hystaspes had to be abandoned.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, closer historical investigations have shown that Vistaspa was the last of the line of native princes ruling in Bactria before the conquest of that country by the Assyrians in B. C. 1200. So the latter date may be taken as a minimum for the epoch of Zoroaster. Careful critics have placed him at a period considerably more remote. It is safe to say that he flourished under the Kaianian princes of Bactria, *before* the Assyrian conquest.

Zoroaster came without supernatural claims, but his ministry was such as soon to give him the reputation of being a supernatural personage. His life was above reproach, devoted to the great work of introducing a truer and purer faith among his countrymen. His reform was in the nature of a protest against the sensuous doctrines and idolatrous ceremonial of the prevailing system. His teachings are contained in the Zendavesta—the bible of the Iranian nations. The general effect of his work was to substitute the essence for the outer shell of religion and to elevate spirit in the place of form. Ahura-Mazdão was a spirit, and they who worshiped him must do so in spirit and in truth. So taught the prophet of Bactria.

It was among the hills of Persia that the doctrines of Zoroaster found their safest refuge. At a time when Media under Astyages was going rapidly down into the bogs of idolatry, the hardy race of Persians, still uncorrupted by luxury and by pageants appealing

<sup>1</sup> This for the same reason that the works of Chaucer are sufficient proof that their author did not flourish in the age of Queen Anne.



to the senses, sustained the simple faith with earnestness and zeal. Monotheism was accepted. One God, over and above nature, was believed in and worshiped. To him was ascribed such titles as the "Lord of Heaven," the "Maker of Heaven and Earth." The religious idea was dominant. Even in affairs of state there was a strict and outspoken recognition of Ahura-Mazdâo as the supreme ruler of the world. The great kings prayed to him as the giver of life and victory.

Still, the lesser powers of nature were recognized as divine. It was beyond the genius even of Zoroaster to grasp the idea of the absolute unity of the universe. It was admitted that there was a pantheon of minor deities. These might properly be prayed to, or appeased with sacrifices, or adored in worship. The unequivocal supremacy of Ahura-Mazdâo was the essential principle. That being granted, it was not impious to cry out to the lesser gods.

It is impossible to say at what precise period in Persian history the doctrines of dualism began to gain a foothold. Certain it is that they were not of the original system. Their introduction marks the beginning of that degeneration which has characterized every religion in the world under the refinements of theology. As already said in the History of Media, the Zoroastrian priests came by and by to discriminate the evil powers of nature from the good, and unable to realize the existence of a higher law which includes in its beneficence the presence of evil as a necessary element in the problem of the world, they adopted the expedient of personification and set up a catalogue of devils. It was one of the bad evolutions of depraved ingenuity.

As in the case of the early Medes, the worship of the Persians consisted in prayers to Ahura-Mazdâo and the good spirits who assisted him in the government of mankind. Another part of the ceremony was the chanting of solemn gâthâs, or hymns, in praise of the deity. Sacrifices were offered both to please and to appease the majesty of heaven, and Soma was worshiped as the best gift of the gods. In yielding religiously to intoxica-

tion man entered into the divine moods and spirit.

Of the Persian temples not very much is known. It is possible that the square towers, already described in the chapter on the architecture of the Achæmenians, may have been edifices for the worship of the deities.<sup>1</sup> The form of the altars before which Ahura-Mazdâo was approached in prayer is determined from the sculptures on the tombs. They had in general the shape of a mushroom. The bottom consisted of three diminishing squares. On these was set a stone cube with openings through the center, and this was surmounted with a hemispherical dome. The height of the whole was four or five feet.

Of living sacrifices the horse, as the noblest creature, was preferred. Cattle, sheep, and goats were also offered, and it is too apparent that human beings sometimes bled before the altars. Such sacrifices, however, are said to have been rare, as they were certainly against the nature and spirit of the Zoroastrian faith.

Of idols properly so-called the Persians had none. The Zendavesta everywhere denounces idolatry as contrary to true religion. Symbols, however, were permitted. The most popular emblem was that of Ahura-Mazdâo, the same being a winged circle, sometimes bearing a human figure in the center. This famous symbol is thought to have been copied from the Assyrians, with whom it stood for Asshur. The sign is seen occupying a prominent place in nearly all the Persian sculptures, especially on the face of the rock tombs where the kings were buried. At a later date, when the worship of Mithra, the sun-god, was introduced from the system of India, that deity was honored with a symbol of the great orb over which he presided, the same being in the Persian sculptures a plain disk and not a four-rayed circle like that seen on the monuments of the Ninevites.

In the account given in Book Fourth of the beliefs of the Medes, mention has been made of the spirits of good and evil—the *ahuras* and the *devas* of Iranic mythology. On one of the old pillars at Pasargadæ, thought to have been erected by Cyrus the Great, is

<sup>1</sup> See Book Sixth, p. 324.

a colossal figure representing the Good Genius of the Persian faith, the great angel Sraosha, one of the most benign conceptions found in the records of paganism. The figure is that of a man with four wings outspread at the shoulders, his hands lifted before a calm, pure face, as if in the act of conferring blessings from the treasury of heaven.<sup>1</sup> Upon his head rise the two spreading horns of power, and between these on either side stands a small misshapen figure of a human being. In the center of the outspread horns is a complex triple ornament, evidently symbolical, but the sense not easily perceived. In many of the sculptures quaint diabolical figures are seen representing the *devas* or mischievous imps whose business it was to torment human life with vexations and spleen.

The belief in one supreme God and the detestation of the practices of idolatry were the elements in the Persian faith upon which the strong religious sympathy heretofore referred to as existing between the subjects of the Achæmenians and the Jews was founded. In these respects the two peoples ran in the same channels of thought and practice, and the favor shown the Jewish nation by Cyrus and Darius was evidently traceable to community of belief.

By and by, in the latter days of the monarchy, when vice and luxury had sapped the heroic virtues of the first age of Persian greatness, corruptions came in, and defiled the primitive faith of the people. It was the story of Median apostasy repeated. The old Scythic tribes inhabiting the country before the conquest by the Persians had been Magians. This system had prevailed among the barbarous tribes of the Great Plateau before the days of Zoroaster, so that the doctrines introduced by that reformer were superimposed on a basis of belief that was ever ready to rise up from the beds of human nature and reassert its supremacy. Perhaps this sub-

stratum of religious belief, combined with the general social degeneration in the times of the later monarchy, made the purer doctrines of Zoroastrianism fall an easy prey to the more showy but less substantial system of the Magians. This change in faith, however, was rather a union or amalgamation of the two systems than a conquest of one by the other. Henceforth, till the coming of Alexander, the leading doctrines and practices of both Zoroastrianism and Magism were retained in the agglomerated faith of the Persians.

One of the features of this religious degeneration was the introduction of the worship of Mithra, the god of the sun, and his elevation to a rank equal, if not superior, to that of Ahura-Mazdão himself. This innovation took place in the reign of Artaxerxes Mnemon, and from that date forth the Persians may be said to have been worshipers of the sun. The change in the national faith was marked, as already said, by the presence of the sun-symbol along with that of Ahura-Mazdão in the sculptures of Persepolis.

The general effect of the modifications here mentioned was to cause an approximation of Zoroastrianism to the other forms of religious faith prevailing in Western Asia. The ceremonies of Media and Persia were no longer distinct in method or purpose. The essential integrity and elevation of the primitive belief were allowed to fall into desuetude, and the religion of show took the place of the spiritual doctrines inculcated by him of Bactria. Until this date Persia had been a land without temples. Now building in honor of the gods began to be a passion, but before time enough had elapsed for the country to be covered with great temples like those of Egypt and Babylonia, the Macedonian conqueror stood at the door and knocked. Before the day of Arbela, the simple faith of the ancient people had been replaced with a system of vainglorious idolatry.

<sup>1</sup> See Book Fourth, p. 219.



CHAPTER XXXII.—CIVIL AND MILITARY ANNALS.



REFERENCES to the Persian race are found in the Assyrian inscriptions as early as the reign of Shalmaneser II., about the middle of the ninth century B. C. These people

were then located in the south-western parts of Armenia, and had a tribal government under chieftains who were their leaders in war. The inscriptions mention twenty-five of such clans who were obliged to pay tribute to the Assyrians. For three reigns this relation of dependency to the Ninevite kings was maintained. The tribes were even at this early date closely associated with the Medes, who were regarded as their kinsmen and confederates. Nearly a century then elapsed before the Persians are again mentioned. In the reign of Sennacherib, however, they are a second time heard of in a situation which implied a migration from their old haunts in Armenia. It was in the district north-east of Susiana, on the very borders of Persia Proper, that the tribes next appear. From this locality they easily spread into the country where their real historical development began.

It was not far from the date of the capture of Nineveh by Cyaxares that the Persians grew into a monarchy. About the close of the seventh century B. C., they were sufficiently consolidated to attract the attention of their neighbors as an independent power. It was at this date, as nearly as may be determined, that ACHÆMENES, founder of the great line of sovereigns bearing his name, ascended the throne of Persia. The scattered tribes were united under one government, and royalty was recognized as the foundation of the state. Of the deeds of Achæmenes very little is known. He is celebrated in the inscriptions of Behistun and elsewhere rather as the father of great monarchs and the founder of the kingdom than for any actual accomplishments of peace or war. As a gen-

eral rule, however, a famous character is not born of nothing, and we may safely conclude that the builder of the primitive Persian monarchy was one of those barbaric geniuses without whose agency the ancient world could hardly have been lifted from the quagmires.

Achæmenes was succeeded on the throne by his son TEÏSPES, of whom our information is still more limited. His importance, like that of most of the kings of the world, seems to have been derived from his father and his descendants. Of the next two rulers the names even have not been certainly ascertained, but it is believed that one of them was called CAMBYSES. It appears that in his reign one event of some importance occurred, the same being an intermarriage between his daughter Atossa and the king of Cappadocia. This would imply that considerable state-craft had been developed at the Persian court, and that the kingdom had grown to such importance as to make a marriage with one of its princesses desirable to foreign rulers.

Meanwhile, the kingdom of the Medes on the north had become especially powerful in Western Asia. According to Herodotus, the Persians were subordinated to their kinsmen by conquest as early as 634 B. C., and in this condition they remained, subject to the exactions of a galling dependency until the relations of the two countries were reversed by the strong arm of Cyrus. The authority of the native inscriptions, however, indicates no such conquest, and it is probably true that the tributary relations of Persia to the sister kingdom arose rather out of juniority and kinship than out of conditions imposed by the sword. Certain it is, however, that there was a dependency of the younger kingdom upon the elder, and that Persia down to the time of Cyrus should be regarded rather as a fief of Media than as an independent state. No doubt the kings of this period were restive under their subordination, and awaited the day when their political condition should be revo-

lutionized. Their resentment, moreover, was constantly whetted by the enforced residence of the heir apparent of the Persian crown at the court of the Median king. For it was one of the conditions of the dependency that the crown prince of Persia should be retained during his minority at the Median capital.

Such was the condition of affairs when CAMBYSES, the father of Cyrus the Great, occupied the throne. It was the daydawn of Persian ascendancy. Astyages was now king of Media. That power had run a rapid course up to greatness and down to effeminacy. Friendly relations were maintained between the two kingdoms of the Medes and Persians. Mandané, the daughter of Astyages, was the wife of Cambyzes and mother of the young prince Cyrus, who, in accordance with the custom, was obliged to reside at the court of his grandfather. Here, being a young man of genius and ambition, he became a close student of the political condition. He saw that Media was in no condition to extend her power or even defend herself against aggression. He saw that the vices of Magism had sapped the national faith, and that, as compared with his father's hardy and virtuous government, there was no longer any necessity or even fitness for the subjection of his country to the king of the Medes. He revolved these things in his mind, and was already well advanced in the concept of rebellion when those fortuitous circumstances arose by which the crisis was precipitated. The escape of Cyrus from the court of his grandfather; the efforts of the latter to retake him; the insurrection of the Persians in behalf of their prince; the invasion of the country by Astyages; the fierce battles which were fought; the final stand of the Persian army on the hills around Pasargadæ; the discomfiture and rout of the Medes; the death of Cambyzes, and the undisputed mastery of the whole situation by the victorious Cyrus,—all this has been recounted in the preceding pages.<sup>1</sup>

It will be remembered that, long before this revolution, Assyria had succumbed to Cyaxares, who, with Nabopolassar of Babylon

and the king of Lydia, took Western Asia for an inheritance. By this sudden reversal of the relations between Media and Persia—by which the former, with very little resistance from the Medes themselves, was brought to acknowledge the supremacy of the latter—the Persian prince found himself suddenly in possession of the leadership of the better part of Asia. The kingdom became an empire. The Aryan race obtained the mastery of the great Semitic nations of Mesopotamia and the West. A solidarity was thus accomplished of all the Iranian peoples of the wide regions beyond the Zagros. The conditions for the sudden development of a great political power, perhaps the greatest which the annals of the world had yet presented, were all existent, and nothing was lacking which genius could supply in the ambitious and warlike prince under whom that power was to burst into luxuriant leafage and blossom.

CYRUS, the son of Cambyzes, and founder of the Persian Empire, was born about the year B. C. 580. His birthplace is thought to have been Ecbatana. Before he was born his grandfather, Astyages, had ominous dreams, and gave orders that the child should be put to death as soon as born. A certain Harpagus, however, an officer in the royal court and a believer in fate, gave the babe to a herdsman, who reared him as his son.

Of course, the lad, being a prince incognito, ruled all his playfellows. So much for natural selection. He gave orders that a certain Mede should be scourged, and when this brought on difficulty Cyrus was taken into his grandfather's presence, and by him was recognized. It was now too late to kill the royal scion, but the son of Harpagus was put to death as a proper punishment for his father's disobedience. After this, Cyrus remained at the court, and before his escape from Ecbatana was instructed by Harpagus in the rudiments of rebellion and the best means of subverting the kingdom of the Medes. The result has already been narrated. The subsequent history of the great king is a part of the history of his times, and will be presented in the following narrative.

The conquest of Ecbatana by Cyrus was

<sup>1</sup>See Book Fourth, pp. 234-236.



accepted by the Medes as a matter of course. The young prince was already a favorite with a majority of the Median nobles. They who in matters of religion longed for a return to the simple faith of the fathers, hailed him as a deliverer from national apostasy. He was, moreover, a grandson of the recent king, and might, therefore, be regarded almost as the rightful heir to the throne. Every circumstance favored the peaceable assumption by him of all the rights and prerogatives hitherto belonging to the kings of Media. Such was the ready acquiescence in the new order of the peoples beyond the Zagros.

To the Assyrians the change was only a change of masters. To them it imported nothing that a Persian rather than a Mede should inherit whatever was left of the glory of Nineveh and Calah. So they accepted the substitution of one dynasty for another without any effort on their part to regain their lost independence. In looking around the horizon, Cyrus could discover but one quarter from which to anticipate the coming of danger. This was in the extreme North-west. In this connection, the tripartite division of Western Asia by Cyaxares, Nabopolassar, and the king of Lydia will be readily recalled. After the accession of Cyrus, it was this kingdom of Lydia which appeared to him the only power of which he had occasion to be apprehensive. It was, therefore, to this remote country between the Halys and the Ægean to which the Persian king first turned his attention. At this time the Lydian monarch was CRÆSUS, who, as we have already seen—in order to anticipate the movements of his foe—hastily sent an embassy to the king of Babylonia, inviting his coöperation against the Persian. How that invitation was accepted and became the ground for the subsequent invasion of Lower Mesopotamia and the overthrow of Babylon, has already been narrated.<sup>1</sup> In this place we have to do only with the conquest of Lydia by the Persians.

Cræsus was not averse to the war. His father had for a long time withstood the assaults of the Medes led by Cyaxares, and had finally, after the skies were so ominously

veiled at the Battle of the Eclipse, secured an honorable and advantageous alliance by intermarriage between his own house and that of Ecbatana. Cræsus had as little cause as his father to dread disaster in a contest with the Iranians from beyond the mountains. And so, without waiting to receive active aid or even assurances of aid from the Babylonians, he flung himself into a war with Cyrus.

The Lydian king made great preparations for the conflict. In addition to the resources of his own kingdom—then by far the most powerful and opulent in Asia Minor—he secured an alliance with Pharaoh Amasis of Egypt, and also with the oligarchy of Sparta. Thus fortified with enormous wealth and with the support of several of the most powerful states of the West, to say nothing of expected aid from Nabonadius of Babylon, he felt himself strong enough to confront even the conqueror of the Medes.

Cyrus began his work by diplomacy. Knowing that Lydia had but recently subdued many of the small states between the Halys and the Ægean, and learning that a large per cent of the people of those states were of Greek descent and therefore of dispositions exceeding averse to despotic rule, he sent emissaries among them to test their loyalty to the Lydian king, and, if possible, to foment insurrections. At this time, however, the Ionian Greeks, who were engaged in commerce by land and sea, were not especially galled by the rule of the easy-going Cræsus, and perceiving that war meant ruin to merchants, thought it not wise to break their allegiance; and so the agents of Cyrus returned to their master with no results.

The Persian was not discouraged. Throwing aside all expedients, he put himself at the head of his army and advanced rapidly to the west. Taking the circuitous route from Mesopotamia, he came by way of Erzerum into that part of Northern Cappadocia known afterwards as the Kingdom of Pontus, and soon found himself on the borders of his adversary's country. Cræsus, meanwhile, had advanced to meet his antagonist. Several Cappadocian towns were taken by the Lydians, and the two armies came together in a

<sup>1</sup> See Book Fifth, p. 299.

district called PTERIA. Here a hard battle was fought, but night came on without decisive results. On the morrow the Persians did not renew the fight; and Crœsus, seeing that with an inferior force he had held his own in a whole day's battle against the renowned warrior of the East, drew the false conclusion that the Persian was overrated, that he durst not renew the conflict, and that no further hostilities need be expected until the following spring. For it was already well advanced towards winter. Acting on these erroneous deductions, the Lydian monarch fell back across the Halys and proceeded, at his own capital of Sardis, to disband a large part of his troops, trusting to re-collect them in the spring in time to foil any attempts of his adversary.

Cyrus, it appears, had foreseen precisely the course which the Lydian would take. For himself he had no thought of allowing the invasion to lag. So, as soon as he was informed of the policy of the king of the Lydians, he pressed forward, crossed the Halys, and came with great rapidity into the immediate vicinity of Sardis. Crœsus, though surprised, was not dismayed. He gathered the remnant of his army, mostly native Lydians, and went out to give the Persians battle. Cyrus had respect enough for his antagonist to act with extreme circumspection.

The Lydian cavalry was at this time regarded as the best in Western Asia; so, in the beginning of the battle, which was fought in the valley of the Hermus, but a few miles from the capital, the Persian king ordered a line of camels to be arranged in that part of the field where they would be opposed to the Lydian horse. The latter were frightened into a stampede, but the cavalymen dismounted and fought on foot, and the whole battle on the side of the Lydians was pressed with the greatest courage. The Persians, however, gained ground in every part, and after a very hard conflict the Lydians were driven within the walls of Sardis. Here Crœsus determined to defend himself to the last extreme.

Cyrus at once began a siege; for the city was walled. The Lydians suffered no great

alarm, deeming the capital impregnable. Their courage was increased by an unsuccessful assault made by the Persians. Crœsus sent messengers to the provincial states of his kingdom and to Egypt and Babylonia to urge forward contingents and supplies to the end that the Persian king might be overwhelmed. After his attack on the ramparts Cyrus invested the city, and the siege was progressing slowly when an accident brought about what valor had been unable to accomplish. The citadel, which occupied a part of the defenses, was built on the native rock, from which in a single place a slope led down with a comparatively easy descent to the plain outside. A Persian soldier, happening to see a Lydian whose helmet had fallen over the battlement, descend this slope and return without difficulty, perceived that he and his companions could do the same, and making a rush up the slope, gained the citadel, cut down the guards, and laid the city at the mercy of Cyrus. Sardis fell. Pillage followed. Crœsus, about to be slain, was recognized and taken into the presence of the Persian king. The latter at the first treated his fallen foe with some severity, but afterwards received him into favor. The captive monarch was taken to Ecbatana, where he was given a provincial government, or, at any rate, the revenues of a province for his support. Here, and afterwards at Babylon, he continued to reside for thirty years, a friend of his conqueror and of his successor, Cambyses. Such was the usage of the early Persian kings, whose conduct on the score of humanity may be set in happy contrast with the ferocious bloodthirstiness of contemporary oriental monarchs.

As to the kingdom of Lydia, thus subverted, it was at once annexed to the Persian dominions. With the capture of the king and capital all resistance ceased, as was usually the case in Eastern conquests. Cyrus had no cause of spite against any except those Ionian Greeks who had refused at the suggestion of his ambassadors to break their allegiance to Crœsus.<sup>1</sup> But the punishment of these petty

<sup>1</sup>These circumstances are worthy of special note as being the first in a long train of events involving the relations of the Greek cities of Asia



Greek towns was not considered a work of sufficient importance to detain the king of Persia in the West; so, after a delay of a few weeks in Sardis, he set out for his own capital, having extended the borders of his Empire in a single campaign to the shores of the Ægean sea.

On his departure from the Lydian capital Cyrus committed the government of the country to a certain Tabalus. Another Lydian, named Pactyas, was intrusted with the important duty of transferring the almost fabulous treasures accumulated by Croesus and his predecessors to Ecbatana. The work also involved the transfer of some of the more wealthy and influential Lydian nobles to the capital of the conqueror. Scarcely, however, had this work begun when an insurrection broke out headed by Pactyas himself, who broke with the governor and drove him into the citadel. A large part of the native population, together with the Greek merchants and traders of the city, joined with Pactyas, who was able with the treasures in his possession to employ a large mercenary force against Tabalus. Cyrus, now *en route* for Ecbatana, heard of the insurrection, and detaching a strong body of troops put them under command of Mazares, a Median general, with directions to suppress the revolt and restore order in the lately conquered kingdom. Mazares returned to Sardis, but before he reached the city Pactyas had concluded that discretion was the better part of valor, especially in a rebel, had given up the attempt against Tabalus and fled from Sardis.

The insurrectionists were disarmed and order restored without difficulty. Some of the Greek towns whose citizens had espoused the cause of Pactyas were taken and the people sold as slaves. The rebel leader was hunted down in the island of Chios. He was surrendered under command of Mazares, who soon afterwards died, and was succeeded in the government of Lydia by another Median general, named Harpagus.

Minor with the Persian Empire, and leading ultimately to those wars of world-wide fame in which "all Asia" was precipitated upon the small but heroic states of Greece.

By him a policy less severe was adopted towards the Ionian towns of Asia Minor. He proceeded to reduce them to submission, but in many instances the inhabitants were permitted to escape, and in others the terms exacted were so easy that the example of submission spread from city to city, until not only they but the adjacent Greek islands—with the exception of Samos—voluntarily surrendered, and became tributary to the Persians.

In this general establishment of the authority of the Great King along the shores of the Ægean, one or two circumstances are worthy of special note. Policy began to take the place of brute force. This was illustrated in the conduct of Cyrus towards Miletus. This city had for a long time held out against the Lydians. It had finally yielded to Croesus only a short time before he himself was overthrown by a greater. Cyrus was quick to recognize this course of Miletus, and the city was therefore excepted when the orders were given to Harpagus to reduce all the Asiatic Greeks to submission. The greatest of the cities of these people was thus made a conspicuous example of the favor which was likely to follow in all cases to those who stood against the enemies of Persia. Another circumstance is the appearance at this time of wise statesmanship—at least by suggestion—among the Greeks of the Ionian towns—such statesmanship as, if adopted, might possibly have saved them, and perhaps even their countrymen beyond the Ægean from the Persian scourge. It was at this time that Thales, a philosopher of Miletus, proposed that a Greek Congress, to be constituted of representatives from all the coast towns of Asia Minor and the littoral islands, should assemble at Teos and form a confederacy, with a view to securing the independence of each and all. It was nothing less than a rational measure looking to the establishment of Greek nationality; but the spirit of localism, which, in some shape or other, was the bane of the Greeks in all their subsequent history, was already too strong to be overcome, and the suggestion of Thales was of little practical effect.

In the meantime Harpagus continued his conquests. Forming a large force of mercenaries, composed chiefly of the Ionians and Æolians, he marched into Caria and easily overran the country. The Greeks also of the Dorian towns on the coast gave up without a struggle and became tributary to the Persian king. The Lycians, however, in alliance with the Caunians, made a stubborn resistance. The story of their defense is one of tragic heroism. Overpowered by the superior forces of Harpagus, they retreated into their two towns, Caunus and Xanthus, and when these could be defended no longer, they applied the torch to their own homes, burned their wives and children, and then rushing forth fell upon their enemies and fought till the last man perished.

On reaching his own capital, after the conquest of Lydia, Cyrus immediately turned his attention to the countries on his eastern borders. Of these the most important was Bactria. Inhabited, like Media and Persia, by people of the Iranic race, having its own traditions and history, famous as the home of Zoroaster, this land had an affinity in language, customs, and population with the best parts of the Empire. During the time of the Median ascendancy Bactria had been nominally dependent upon that power, but no actual reduction of the people to the extent of incorporating them with the other nations subjugated by Cyaxares had taken place. The Bactrians were brave and warlike, but less skillful in tactics and discipline than their invaders. Cyrus, however, in his campaign against them, found them a formidable foe; and it was his superiority in numbers and equipment, combined with the impetus of victory which his army had now acquired, rather than naked valor, which led to his success. The Bactrians were subdued, made their submission, and were incorporated in the Empire.

The next campaign—following immediately after the Bactrian—was directed against the great nation of the Saccæ. These multitudinous barbarians were excellent soldiers, fighting desperately both on foot and on horseback, wielding the bow and the battle-axe with terrible effect, wheeling and whirling in battle

like swift clouds driven by angry winds. Men and women fought side by side in the ranks, and there was little difference in the effectiveness of their blows or courage. They came into the field a half-million strong to resist the coming of Cyrus. In one terrible battle they had some advantage. Their king—Amorges—was taken by the Persians, but the queen—Sparethra—took his place at the head of the battle, which was fought with such desperation that several Persian officers of distinction fell into the hands of the Saccæ and enabled them to get back their king by an exchange of prisoners. Nevertheless the prowess of the Persians proved too much for the undisciplined rage of the barbarians, and they were overcome. Like the other tribes, they submitted to the Persian yoke and became tributary to the conqueror.

After this success Cyrus rapidly overran the territories of nearly all those nations which have been described in a preceding chapter as provincial dependencies of the Empire. Hyrcania, Parthia, Chorasmia, Sogdiana, Arya, Sattagydia, and Gandaria, each in turn fell before the resistless arms of Persia. As far north as the Jaxartes—on whose banks a town named Cyropolis for generations bore witness to the presence of the conqueror—and as far east as Afghanistan, and southward to Seistan, the Persian king continued his triumphant march, repeating in each province the drama of victory. At the close of the great campaign the whole vast region bounded on the north by the Jaxartes, on the east by the valley of the Indus, on the south by the deserts of Khorassan, and on the west by the Caspian sea, had been reduced to submission and added to the Persian dominions.

According to the Greek historian, Arrian, who was Roman prefect of Cappadocia in the second century of our era, the next campaign of Cyrus was into Gedrosia. But of this expedition we have no details, and the fact of the conquest has been called in question. The country of the Gedrosians, however, was, in the times of Darius Hystaspis, a province of the Empire, and it must therefore have been added by himself or some of his predecessors, most likely Cyrus. Be this as it may, the



conquest was effected at some time between the reign of the latter and that of Darius.

The period assigned to these Eastern campaigns of Cyrus is thirteen or fourteen years. Perhaps during these long-continued wars and marches he returned at intervals to his own capital. It is probable that the monarch spent many of his winters either at Ecbatana or Pasargadæ, and thence with the opening of spring renewed his military operations after the prevalent manner of the times. Thus, for a long period, by the constant occupations of Cyrus in the East, did Nabonadius, king of Babylon, secure exemption from the punishment which he had provoked by his alliance with Cræsus in former years. It does not often happen, however, that an Eastern king allows his wrath to cool in the case of one who has entered a league against him, and so the vengeance of the Persian was procrastinated rather than extinguished. When his Eastern wars were ended he was already sixty years of age, but his ardor was not cooled, and he now found time to inflict on the Babylonians the chastisement long due for their defection and disloyalty to old traditions of friendship.

It was in the year B. C. 539 that the Persian monarch found himself in readiness to proceed against Babylon. It will be remembered that he was delayed one winter in Susiana, as it has been alleged, by the drowning of the sacred horses. Here it was, at any rate, either by design or accident, that his soldiers became expert in the use of the spade and learned how to change the channels of great rivers. In the spring of the next year he resumed his march into the Babylonian plain, and in the course of that memorable summer succeeded in the complete demolition of the Empire of the Babylonians. How the great city fell; how Nabonadius was cooped up in Borsippa; how, foreseeing the inevitable, he surrendered himself and his people to the conqueror, has already been fully narrated in the preceding pages.<sup>1</sup> With the capture of Babylon there was an immediate rec-

ognition of the new order of things throughout Mesopotamia. Susiana had been already subdued. Syria and Palestine passed as a matter of course to the conqueror. His Empire was suddenly enlarged by territories whose aggregate area was not less than a quarter of a million of square miles. From the Indus to the Mediterranean there was no longer left a single state able to throw serious resistance or even an interesting impediment in the way of the Great King. Up to this time in the history of the world no other had ruled such vast dominions. It was the sudden ascendancy of a new family of mankind. For fifteen hundred years the Semites and Cushites had dominated the best parts of Western Asia and Africa. It was now the turn of the Aryans to introduce their world-wide supremacy by the establishment of their first great Empire. This collapse of the political power of the Semitic race involved a great change in the opinions and usages of mankind. It was a crisis which marked the downfall of an old system of religious faith which, variously inflected, had prevailed among the Mesopotamian nations and in various countries whose people were in race-affinity with the Chaldeans and Assyrians. For all this there was substituted a new set of doctrines and beliefs, in spirituality greatly superior to the old, in philosophy much more accordant with right reason. The ancient religious beliefs of Babylon and Nineveh were impaled on the sword of Cyrus the Great and held up for a spectacle; and the gods of the Babylonian plain did a sudden and everlasting obeisance to the spirit of Zoroaster.

Inside of the borders of the Empire established by the Persian king there was little left to engage his energies. On the extreme south-west the little state of Phœnicia neglected or refused to acknowledge the new order by sending tokens of submission. It does not appear, however, that the mind of Cyrus was seriously disturbed by this act, which at the worst could occasion but little trouble. He had been so long accustomed to combating with enemies of larger growth that he gave little attention to the hostile attitude assumed by the Phœnicians. It was Egypt,

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the capture of Babylon and the establishment of Persian supremacy in Mesopotamia, see Book Fifth, p. 300.

rather than Phœnicia, to which he looked as the next field worthy of his talents and ambition, and with a view to aiding his interests and plans in this direction he adopted a measure which, to say the least, was as much one of statecraft as of religious preference.

This was the restoration to their own country of the captive Jews of Babylon. For seventy years these exiles had toiled at the public works in and about the great city. In the latter part of this period the rigor of the

come out from Jewry were now dead, but the enthusiasm and gratitude of their children were easily awaked at the prospect of a return to the abandoned altars of their fathers; and the edict of emancipation issued by Cyrus was hailed with delight by the people, who, under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah, returned to Palestine and began the work of rebuilding Jerusalem.

While the invasion of Egypt was still postponed by Cyrus, his attention was called



THE REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM.

Babylonians had relaxed, and the servile race had found some favor in the eyes of their masters. It will be remembered that the later Babylonian kings had more than once contemplated restoring the Jews to their own land. This idea was adopted—though for different reasons—by Cyrus, who perceived that such an act would assure the establishment of a friendly nation on the immediate borders of Egypt, and in the direct line of march which he must take in case of an invasion of that country. All but a few of the generation who seventy years before had

by the turbulence of certain barbarian nations to the other extreme of his empire. It is not impossible that there was that in the disposition of the king which led him to prefer campaigns against the half-savage races of the Great Plateau rather than war with the luxurious peoples of Asia Minor and the Southwest. At any rate, instead of engaging in a war with Egypt, he began a march to the north-east for the purpose of chastising the wild tribes of that region, who had grown insolent by immunity. The particular people to be punished were, according to Herodotus,



the Massagetæ, who had their haunts beyond the Jaxartes; but according to Ctesias, the race against which the campaign was directed was a nation called the Derbices, dwelling next to India. The stories of the results of the war that ensued are also contradictory. The account of Herodotus is, that in a great battle with the Massagetæ Cyrus was at first victorious, but that afterwards he was defeated and slain, his body falling into the hands of the barbarians, by whom it was treated with shameful indignity. The story told by Ctesias is that the Derbices were assisted by the Indians, who furnished them with soldiers and elephants. In a hard fought battle Cyrus was defeated and mortally wounded. In a second engagement, however, the Persians rallied, and, with the help of the Sacæ, overcame the enemy and compelled them to submit. All accounts agree that Cyrus lost his life. As to his body, that certainly was recovered from the foe, even if it ever fell into their hands; for the tomb of the great conqueror remains at Pasargadæ unto the present day. His reign lasted for twenty-nine years, his death occurring in the year B. C. 529. His exit from power and from the world is wrapped in that strange obscurity which has veiled the final passage of so many of the celebrities of history.

The reign of Cyrus the Great marked an epoch in the history of the ancient world. The transformation from pure orientalism to half-rational methods of government began from this time, and was in some degree traceable to the character of Cyrus. He was a man of genius, essentially warlike, little satisfied with the vocations of peace. In courage and energy he was without a rival among the monarchs of the age he lived in. His judgment was unerring, his foresight equal to any emergency, his humanity far above the spirit of his times. His conduct was frequently marked by charitable features, for which we should look in vain in many modern heroes. Whether in himself, considered as general and king, or in his surroundings, which, as always happens, were determined in their moral tone by his own example, he rises in character far above any other monarch of his own epoch,

perhaps above any *Asiatic* king who ever sat on a throne. The epithet of "Great" which he fairly won may be defended and reëffirmed before the bar of history.

One of the chief influences shed forth from the reign of Cyrus was the birth of Persian art. The simple but massive structures at Pasargadæ were among the best fruits of that strength and energy which diffused itself on every hand. It was the Doric era in Persian architecture. The added glories of the great palaces of the successors of Cyrus at Persepolis were but the natural growth and development of what was begun at Pasargadæ.

Like a prudent king, Cyrus settled the succession in the monarchy. It was ordained that the crown should descend to CAMBYSES, the eldest son of the king. In this respect Cyrus was less embarrassed than his successors, for he had eschewed polygamy and limited himself to but one wife. By her he had five children, two sons and three daughters. The second son was named Smerdis, and to him the king assigned the independent government of several provinces. In this circumstance was laid the foundation of the civil and social broils that ensued, and of the revolution which finally cost his family the throne of the Empire.

For no sooner was Cyrus dead and Cambyzes established in authority than the latter became jealous of his brother Smerdis to the extent of issuing a secret order that he should be put to death. The bloody edict was fulfilled, but all knowledge of the fact was carefully concealed. Only the king and a few confederates knew of the crime that had been committed.

Having thus freed himself from the dangers of rivalry, and taken Nemesis into his confidence, Cambyzes was ready to undertake what his father had contemplated—the conquest of Egypt. It was now a quarter of a century since Pharaoh Amasis, by his alliance with Cræsus, had given mortal offense to Cyrus. But the Lydian king was now resident at the capital of the Empire, and was held in favor with Cambyzes himself; so it seemed malapropos to dig up a difficulty on the score of an extinct quarrel between Persia and Lydia.

The king, therefore, sought some new occasion. He sent an embassy to Egypt and made demands that Amasis should give him his daughter for a wife. The demand was complied with, and for a while Cambyses thought himself in possession of an Egyptian princess; but he soon learned that he had been made the victim of a vile fraud, for the girl, after the manner of human nature, told him that she was only a princess by proxy, not being the daughter of Amasis at all. That crafty ruler had sent an Egyptian damsel named Nitetis to personate his daughter in the Persian palace.

Cambyses, however, was not displeased at the "outrage," for the transaction gave him the very opportunity which he sought to settle old scores and new grievances together. He accordingly began elaborate preparations for the invasion of Egypt. In order to secure a safe passage through the Syrian deserts he made treaties with the Arab chiefs and secured their friendship. He saw that in a war with the Egyptians a naval armament would be indispensable, and to secure this in the distant Mediterranean was a work of the greatest difficulty. The king, however, opened negotiations with the Phœnicians, whom by alternate threats and bribes he induced to furnish fleets for the desired purpose. The island of Cyprus was also seduced from her loyalty to Egypt, and led into a contribution of ships and sailors. The Greek cities of Asia Minor, both Ionian and Æolian, entered the league, and placed a large naval force at the disposal of the Persian king. So, after four years of preparation, in B. C. 525, Cambyses began his invasion. Advancing by way of the Mediterranean coast, he came to PELUSIUM, where the Egyptians had come out to confront him. Here a decisive battle, in which fifty thousand are said to have fallen, was fought, and the Persians were completely victorious. The Egyptians beat a hurried retreat to Memphis, and shut themselves within the fortifications.

Meanwhile, the combined fleets of Phœnicia, Cyprus, and the Greek cities had dispersed the Egyptian armament, so that by the time Cambyses appeared before Memphis the

allied fleet had taken possession of the Nile, and Psametik, who at this juncture succeeded his father, Amasis, on the throne, was rigorously blockaded both by land and water. Nevertheless the resistance was stubborn. The Greek mercenaries in the pay of the Egyptians long and stoutly defended the city; but Persian persistence triumphed in the end, and the capital of the Pharaohs fell into the hands of Cambyses. The captive Psametik was treated with the usual consideration shown to princely prisoners, and was not, for the time, wholly deprived of power.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as the downfall of Egypt was known, the petty states bordering on the Nile valley at once sent in their submission. Thus did the tribes inhabiting the Libyan desert and the more distant colonies of Barea and Cyrenaica. In all the regions immediately adjoining the scene of his recent conquests there was none to furnish Cambyses with occasion for further war. But the passion which he had inherited from his father could not be satiated, and he began to scan the horizon for new fields in which to display his powers. There were in Africa at this time three countries besides those already subjugated, which appeared to the Persian worthy of his arms. These were Carthage in the west, the Oasis of Amun in the distant desert, and Ethiopia in the south. If these were reduced to submission, then all Africa would be under the sway of Persia, as much as Western and Central Asia. What his father had done with the wild tribes between the Jaxartes and Khorassan, Cambyses would do with the nations of the unknown south-west. Three great campaigns were accordingly planned by the conqueror; one against Carthage, one against the Oasis of Amun, and the third against Ethiopia. In the prosecution of the first he was thwarted at the very outset by an unexpected difficulty. The Phœnicians refused to participate in the Carthaginian expedition on the grounds that Carthage was a Phœnician colony, and that they

<sup>1</sup> For a further account of the capture of Memphis by the Persians and the conversion of Egypt into a province of the Empire, see Book First, p. 71.



could not be expected to make war upon their own kinsmen and friends. Without the coöperation of the fleet the campaign was an impossibility, for no march to such a distance with the desert on the left and the sea on the right, could be conducted without a constant resort to ships for necessary supplies. So the attack on Carthage had to be postponed or wholly given up. But the expedition against Amun was immediately undertaken. It will be remembered that this oasis was the seat of the worship of the god Amun, held in such high esteem by the Thebans, and, indeed, by all the hierarchy of Egypt. To overthrow this shrine and altar, and to substitute therefor the rites and ceremonies of Zoroastrianism, seemed to Cambyses a necessary part of the work by which Persia and Persian institutions should become predominant in all the world. So an army of fifty thousand men was organized at Memphis and dispatched against Amun. But Amun was regardful of his ancient rights. The Libyan sands were blown up in a terrific storm, and the whole army was buried alive. Not a man was left to carry the news to Cambyses how nature had fought for Africa.

These checks and disasters angered rather than dismayed the Persian monarch. With the residue of his forces, he now undertook in person the subjugation of Ethiopia. The march lay across the Nubian desert. It was more serious business than the crossing of those Syrian wastes with which the kings of Western Asia were all familiar. The Persian had not advanced far until he began to be distressed by failure of provisions. The farther he went the more straitened became his condition. To go forward was irretrievable ruin; to return was humiliation and disgrace. Necessity turned the scale in favor of retreat. Without striking a blow Cambyses staggered back across the desert, and was glad to find himself again in Egypt with the survivors of his ill-advised expeditions.

The Egyptians—especially the priests—were quick to see what they regarded as the omens of hope in these disasters of their oppressor. To the people the haggard king and his hungry forces seemed now but an army

of shreds and patches. The gods of Africa were evidently in a revival. Wherefore the priests proceeded to declare a new incarnation of Apis, and the people, in accordance with immemorial usage on such occasions, broke forth in a jubilee. Meanwhile, political sedition was at work. Psametik himself, who until now had retained the government—of course, under direction of his conqueror—was detected in treasonable intrigues. The Egyptian princes were mostly engaged in the same dangerous business, and the priests were eager to set fire to the insurrection. But the Persian lion, who had come back half-starved from the Nubian desert, was still a lion, and he soon taught them the folly of supposing him an ass. He seized Psametik and put him to death. The nobles who had conspired with him were also slain. The priests were scourged until their sacred backs were bloody. The new Apis, in all his royal calfhood, was ordered to be brought into the presence of Cambyses, who ran him through with his sword. The festival of the incarnation was abolished by an edict. Every tradition of the hierarchy was openly insulted. The king tore open the sacred sarcophagi, and handled the royal mummies with as much contempt as if they had been pieces of decayed wood. He went into the holy places in the temples of Memphis, and made faces at the image of Phtha. His insulted godship was then taken down and burned. The Egyptians quailed before the angry monarch, whose vehement character they had underestimated, and all symptoms of rebellion immediately disappeared. There is little doubt, however, that the wrath of the king was in the long run an impolitic as well as an un-Persian display of passion, and that the subsequent disquietude and disloyal spirit of the Egyptians was in some degree traceable to the severity with which their first foolish defection was visited. For a series of years, however, all spirit of resistance disappeared, and Egypt, without complaint, assumed a provincial position in the great Empire.

As soon as quiet was completely restored on the Nile, Cambyses, in the year B. C. 522, set out on his return to Persia. He had pro-

ceeded as far as Syria when the most startling news reached him from his own capital. A herald suddenly dashed into the camp and made open proclamation that Cambyzes was dethroned, and demanded submission of all loyal Persians to Smerdis, the king, the son of Cyrus. For the moment Cambyzes was

must be an impostor; but he could not be denounced as such without betraying the crime of the king. Even should Cambyzes now proclaim the truth, he would not be believed; for his assertion would be accepted as the fiction and lie of a falling coward. It was suggested by Prexaspes that the impostor was a



CAMBYSES KILLS THE APIS.

Drawn by H. Vogel.

utterly confounded, not knowing whether his brother was really alive or whether another had assumed his character. It happened, however, that Prexaspes, the Persian nobleman to whom the assassination of Smerdis had been intrusted years before, was with the army, and by him the king was reassured that the perfidious deed had really been accomplished. He who now impersonated Smerdis

certain Gomates, a Magus, to whose brother Cambyzes, in departing for Egypt, had committed the government of his palace—and this conjecture proved to be correct; but it availed the king nothing who or what he was who had seized his throne. In the sore distress and desperation of the case, the Persian king, with the rash impetuosity of his nature, determined to put himself beyond the reach



of conspirators. He drew his sword and plunged it into his side. The wound was mortal, and in a few days he expired. The silent Nemesis had settled her account.

The character of Cambyzes is strongly contrasted with that of his father. The latter preserved to his death the confidence of his army and country. The former was never entirely secure with either. His unsuccessful campaigns in Africa tarnished his reputation as a general, and the loyalty of his troops in the hour of the great crisis may well be doubted. He was subject to extremes of passion, and when aroused was capable of any cruelty. In his private life he is represented to have been of a cold and haughty temper, little conducive of personal esteem. His name, moreover, is stained with the practice of revolting vices and the perpetration of dark crimes. Under the influence of a vile passion he married his own sister, and he procured his brother's assassination. In the Persian inscriptions he is described by epithets indicating the low esteem in which he was held by his countrymen. Nor were the Greek historians more careful of his memory. He remained true to the national religion, and it is believed that an element in his despair was the belief that both his army and his countrymen at large were infected with the vices of Magism to the extent of making hopeless any struggle which he might make to dethrone the usurper Gomates.

To the impostor the death of the king was so far all that could be desired. That event freed himself from the greatest, but not the only, peril which confronted him. He still had a difficult and dangerous part to play. There was the liability to detection. There were his mutilated ears; for Cyrus the Great had cut off those members for the perpetration of a crime. There was the religious imbroglio; for he was the tool of the Magians, who through him hoped to secure in Persia, as they had done in Media, the establishment of a system in which there was some chance for a priesthood to display itself. This feature of the usurpation had to be kept well in the background, both by the managers and the beneficiary; for it was not safe for either

to do more than chuckle in private over the prospect of a religious revolution.

Under conditions such as these, conspirators generally adopt the ruse of advancing some popular measure which shall distract attention from the real purposes to be promoted. Gomates and his Magian counselors accordingly began their government by issuing edicts for the remission of all tributes and military service for the space of three years. These were measures calculated to give great satisfaction, especially in the provinces, where the danger of insurrection was to be most apprehended. As a second step in the direction of allaying discontent, the PSEUDO-SMERDIS—for by that name is he generally known—took to wife all the widows of Cambyzes. This was a popular but dangerous proceeding, for some of these ex-wives of the late king—certainly Atossa—were acquainted with the real Smerdis, and might therefore be expected to reveal the imposture. To prevent this a new rule was adopted for the harem by which the inmates, who had hitherto associated freely within the Gynæceum, were now isolated, each being strictly ordered to remain in her own apartments. All communication, both within and without, was, as to the women of the seraglio, positively interdicted. By these measures the conspirators hoped to trammel up the consequences of the audacious business which they had in hand.

It is, however, in the nature of crime to betray itself. Brief immunity gives a longer rein. Gomates, encouraged by temporary success and instigated by the impatient Magians, soon set about the work of the religious revolution. He ordered the temples of the Zoroastrians to be destroyed and their rites to be discontinued. Everywhere the Magi appeared as the representatives of religion. The adherents of the old system were for the time overawed. In Media the change was, of course, accepted with favor, and in the provinces with indifference. What to them was a change from Ahura-Mazdão to the gods of Sun, Earth, Water, and Air? As for them their own local altars and petty deities had been abolished long ago; so the war of the great gods worshiped by conquerors con-

cerned them not at all. Only in Persia was there danger of insurrection against the measures which Gomates advanced with ever-increasing boldness.

Meanwhile suspicions began to be blown abroad. There were many who recalled the dying declarations of Cambyses to the effect that the self-asserting Smerdis was an impostor. The sudden change in the management of the seraglio, and more particularly the seclusion of the king himself, who neither went beyond the palace walls or permitted himself to be seen within them, added to the growing belief that all was not well with the state. In the minds of all those who were faithful to Zoroastrianism there was still greater cause for suspicion in the religious treason of the secreted monarch, which was such as no true Achæmenian ever could have been guilty of. Still the unseen beast might be a lion, and for a while rebellion smouldered.

After a season, however, rumor spread her wings. There were mutterings in various quarters portending an outbreak. At first these were suppressed, and a few leaders of discontent were put to death. Soon, however, the "Seven Princes" of the Empire took secret counsel regarding the condition of affairs, and it was resolved that the impostor in the palace should be overthrown at all hazards. As a leader of the daring business Darius, one of the Princes, son of Hystaspes, who was a Persian noble of lineal descent from Achæmenes, was chosen. He had himself—if we trust his great inscription on the rocks of Behistun—a clear, even indisputable title to the crown in case of the failure of the line of Cyrus. Even in the life-time of that king Darius had been recognized as of the blood royal, and had been under suspicion of entertaining designs on the crown. Now that Smerdis was killed and Cambyses had killed himself, there was an open road for a legitimate Achæmenian to the throne of the Empire.

On arriving at the capital Darius became the soul of the conspiracy. He and his fellows organized a select band, and were on the eve of assaulting the palace when Gomates took the alarm and fled. He was pursued to

Sictachotes, in Media, where he had taken refuge in a fort. This was entered by Darius and his followers, and the impostor was surrounded and slain. A number of his adherents, who had sought refuge with him in the fort, shared his fate. The head of the usurper, with the indisputable proof of his pernicious career written in the stumps of his ears, was cut off and borne away by the insurgents, who exhibited it everywhere as at once the cause and the justification of their bloody deed. There was a general uprising, and each one felt warranted in cutting down the first Magus whom he met. Until nightfall there was a massacre, but the destruction of life was not renewed on the morrow. An edict was, however, issued that henceforth the anniversary of the death of Gomates should be observed as a solemn festival, during which none of the Magian caste should venture forth under penalty of losing his life.

DARIUS ascended the throne without opposition. He took care to claim the Achæmenian descent, and thus secured himself against any hostility on the part of zealous adherents of the house of Cyrus. In entering upon his reign some additional guarantees of good government were given, though these were merely concessions of privileges and prerogatives to the great princes who had recently helped him to the throne. Among these pledges was that which gave to each prince the unrestricted right to enter the palace and have interviews with the king. Another stipulation was that the royal wives should henceforth be chosen from the families of the Seven Princes, and from them only. In addition to these guarantees it was specially conceded to Otanes, one of the princes, that he and his successor at the head of his house should be exempt from kingly interference, and should be annually honored with a present from his sovereign.

The bottom principles in the recent civil broils in Persia had been essentially religious. To this subject the new monarch at once turned his attention. The Zoroastrian temples were rebuilt and the old rites reinstituted. In proportion as favor was thus shown to the ancient faith the innovations of Magism were carefully eradicated. The general policy of Cyrus was



adopted in the government, and the impression was thus sought to be made that the revolution was really a restitution of the old *régime*.

During the reign of the Pseudo-Smerdis the Jews of the West had had trouble. The rebuilding of their ancient temple, which had been begun under the edict of Cyrus, had, on the petition of the Samaritans, been ordered to cease. After the accession of Darius the enemies of the Jewish people attempted to secure a continuance of the injunction, but the king not only renewed the concessions made by Cyrus but actually opened the royal store-houses to furnish the means for the completion of the work in Jewry.

The religious attitude of Darius was at once his strength and his weakness. In Persia Proper the actions of the king in suppressing Magism met with general favor, and the same was true in Bactria and the north-east. But in other parts of the Empire, especially in Media, the reverse was true. In countries where Magism had come to be preferred to the doctrines of Zoroaster, there was profound though silent hostility to the religious revolution. In this the seeds of discontent were plentiful. The circumstances, moreover, under which Darius had obtained the crown were such as to suggest the possibility of other successful conspiracies. In the distant parts of the Empire the full force of the imposture of Gomates, and the full justice of the Seven Princes in rebelling against him, would not be felt, and Darius would be regarded merely as an insurgent who had won the throne by audacity. The reimposition of tribute and of military service by the new king—things necessary to an actual, but not necessary to a factitious, monarch—tended to disaffection.

All these reasons, and others, combined to launch Darius and his government on a sea of troubles. Almost immediately after the new *régime* was established a series of rebellions broke out, which rolled wave after wave through well-nigh the whole extent of the Empire, and involved in their suppression the persistent efforts of the king for a period of six years. Even the home government was

shaken by a revolt, which was, however, easily quieted by force.

The most serious of the insurrections were in Susiana, Babylonia, Media, Assyria, Armenia, Parthia, Hyrcania, Margiana, Sagartia, and Sacia. In all of these countries rebellion followed rebellion like a succession of explosions, and at times much more than half of the entire Persian dominions were in revolt. If Darius had been a prince subject to alarms, or if he had been wanting in expedients backed by great persistence, he would, in all probability, have been overwhelmed. But he faced his insurgent provinces with true courage, and ultimately showed himself the master.

The rebellions in Susiana and Babylonia broke out at about the same time. Rightly judging the Babylonian insurrection to be the more important, the king at once proceeded to put down the rebels in that country. They were led by a certain Nebuchadnezzar, who showed himself as the son of Nabonadius, the last king of Babylon. Under the prestige of a great name, the insurgent hoped to throw off the Persian yoke and reëstablish the independence of his country. An army was organized under his lead and advanced to the Babylonian frontier on the Tigris. Here Darius found his rebellious subjects posted on the river bank, the stream defended by their boats. But the king crossed in their faces and drove them away in a rout. He pursued Nebuchadnezzar in the direction of Babylon. The latter made another stand on the Euphrates, but was again defeated and driven with the remnant of his forces into the capital. The city was soon surrendered and the rebellion ended. The specter who called himself Nebuchadnezzar was taken and put to death.

On his departure in person against the insurgent army in Babylonia, Darius had dispatched a part of his forces to suppress the revolt in Susiana. These had already achieved some successes before news came of the king's victories over the Babylonians. The Susianian rebellion had been instigated by an aspirant named Atrines, who also claimed royal honors and purposed the reëstablishment of the old monarchy. But this ambitious

leader was overthrown and captured by the troops sent against him. He was sent to Darius, now marching in person against the Susianians, and by him was put to death. A new rebel, however, took his place, with even more lofty pretensions. He called himself Martes, and had it given out that he was a descendant of the ancient kings. His pretensions were soon extinguished; for the king was now free from the peril of the Babylonian revolt, and Martes was seized by the Susianians, terrified at the approach of their sovereign, and by them was put to death before the king's arrival.

Meanwhile, in the North, the three great states of Media, Assyria, and Armenia had revolted, and were making common cause against Darius. At the head of the rebellion was Xathrites, a Mede, who was proclaimed king. He, like the other insurgents of his time, claimed royal descent, representing himself as a great-grandson of Cyaxares. His claim was recognized not only by the Medes, but also by the Assyrians and Armenians, who acknowledged him as their sovereign. Here, then, was an affair of the most alarming proportions.

Darius now established his court at Babylon. Thence he sent forth his generals to test the strength of his antagonist. The main army was put under the command of Hydarnes, one of the Princes who had helped Darius to the throne. He advanced into Media, while Dadarses, with another division, was sent against the Armenians, and Vomises against the Assyrians. All three armies had hard battles with the insurrectionists, and in some of the engagements the forces of the king were worsted, but the rebels were finally and completely subdued. Xathrites fled towards Parthia, but was taken and brought to Ecbatana, where Darius had him dreadfully mutilated and chained to the door-posts of the palace. After some days of suffering he was crucified. The whole North was speedily overrun by the king's armies and taught the bitter lesson of experience.

The revolts in Parthia, Hyrcania, and Sagartia were less important and were easily quelled. The terror excited by the Great

King's successes and by the severe measures adopted by him against those who defied his authority, was borne on the wings of Rumor, and was of itself sufficient in most instances to deter the tempted from the rashness of rebellion. In one instance there was a domestic insurrection. While Darius was absent in Parthia, another impostor, a second Smerdis *redivivus*, appeared and claimed the throne. The remnant of the Magi were ready for any thing. A party of adherents gathered around the pretender, who took the field and endeavored to win by force as well as fraud. But he was soon overwhelmed by the Persian army, which could not be seduced from its loyalty, and was captured and crucified.

While these events were taking place in Persia, a second rebellion had broken out in Babylonia. A certain Aracus who, like the preceding impostor, styled himself "Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabonadius," raised the standard of revolt, and gathered around him the malcontents of the kingdom. A force was sent against him by Darius, and he was soon taken and put to death. With his overthrow there seems to have been an end of turbulence, and the king found, for the first time since his accession, an opportunity to turn his attention to other matters, not, however, until he had compassed the killing of the governor of Sardis for some disloyal conduct, and procured the death of the Egyptian Pharaoh for daring to put his image on the coins of the Empire.

The monarch, as soon as quiet was everywhere restored, gave himself to grave questions of statecraft. The occurrence of rebellions and the heterogeneous character of the nations composing the Empire, led him to consider the feasibility of reconstructing the whole frame of government, to the end that tranquillity might henceforth be the rule and revolt the exception in the history of his country.

The first object proposed by Darius was the establishment of uniformity throughout the Empire by the institution of a government by satrapies. The satrapy was either a certain district specially organized as a provincial department, or one of the many petty



states over which the new order was extended. The governor, or satrap, with his attendant officers, was in every case to hold a like relation to his sovereign, but the people over whom he ruled were permitted to retain their local institutions of language, law, and custom. The satrap was in all cases appointed by the king, and was removable at his pleasure. He was charged with the collection of the taxes, the maintenance of order, and the administration of the laws. He was the representative of the sovereign, and might institute—indeed was expected to institute—a court similar to that of the Empire, but less elaborate. The satrap had his retinue of councilors, eunuchs, guards, and servants. He had his harem organized and managed after the example set by the king. He had his court ceremonial and edicts, all intended to do locally and on a small scale what the Great King did with pomp and pageantry. The office was one which in its very nature was subject to the grossest abuses. Since the chief duty of the satrap was to collect and forward to his master certain revenues and tributes, and since, that done, the king was not likely to look carefully into the matter of assessments and taxes, a vast opportunity was given for peculation, and most of the satraps availed themselves thereof to heap up enormous treasure. Neither the property nor the honor of the provincials had any guaranty against the rapacity of the local governors.

The hardships to which the people of the satrapies were subject were increased by the military system which was adopted. The army of the Empire was composed almost exclusively of Medes and Persians. The troops were quartered at various places in the satrapies, each fort and stronghold being thus occupied by a foreign soldiery, who cared nothing for the locality in which they were established. The number of satrapies into which the Empire was divided varied at different times from twenty to thirty. In a few instances, as in Cilicia, Paphlagonia, and Phœnicia, the native rulers of the country were retained as a kind of concession to the old system, or perhaps a necessary compromise with the spirit of the people.

As to Persia Proper, her condition was exceptional. Over her no governor was appointed. The home kingdom was under the immediate jurisdiction of the king. Nor were any regular taxes assessed against the people of Persia; they, on the contrary, making voluntary contributions when the king passed through the country.

One of the principal advantages derived from the new order was the substitution of a system of regular taxation for the method of special levies and contributions which had hitherto prevailed. The aggregate amount obtained under the new *régime* was, from the system introduced in the assessments and collections, much greater than the sums derived from the old manner of special levy. The annual amount assessed to each satrapy varied according to the wealth and the character of the productions of the province. The poorer satrapies paid an annual tribute of a little over two hundred thousand dollars. The better class were assessed to the extent of about a million and a-quarter dollars; while the richest—India—was obliged to pay as much as five million dollars annually! Sometimes the levy was made *in kind*. Egypt was assessed to be paid in corn; Media, in mules, sheep, and horses; and Babylonia was, at least in one instance, required to meet a levy of five hundred boy eunuchs!

The chief danger to which the satrapial government was exposed was, of course, the liability of treason and conspiracy on the part of the governor. The avoidance of this peril seems to have received a large share of the king's attention. The difficulty was met by the establishment of a system of checks among the royal officers. Of these there were three in each satrapy directly amenable to the king. These were the satrap himself, the military commandant of the district, and the secretary. The first was the administrative officer of the government; the second was responsible for his division of the army; and the duty of the third was to keep the monarch constantly informed of the state of affairs in the provinces. He was called the "King's Eye" and the "King's Ear," and it was not the smallest part of his work to see and hear

the first indications of disloyalty on the part of his fellow-officials, the governor and the commandant. It will readily be seen that officers thus checked and watched at every turn would have but a small margin of opportunity for plotting mischief against the state.

Besides this counterpoise and purposely-contrived jealousy of the provincial officers, the king sent annually into each satrapy a trusted legate of his own, armed with power and accompanied by a sufficient number of troops to revolutionize the local government should he detect therein any thing inimical to the king's majesty. In addition even to this safeguard, and as if to make assurance doubly sure, the satrapial officers, that is, the three principals in the government, were appointed, as far as practicable, from the king's own kinsmen, and were generally intermarried with the daughters of the princely houses of the Empire.

Another measure instituted by Darius, having direct reference to his scheme of government, was the establishment of post-houses and post-roads between the different parts of the Empire and the capital. The stations were founded at a distance from each other equal to the space which a horse was estimated to be able to travel at full gallop without breaking. At each post was placed a relay of couriers and swift steeds, by which a message could be transmitted, even from remote provinces, almost on the wings of the wind.

Mention should also be made of the system of coinage instituted by the Great King. His name of Darius has furnished to the vocabulary of the world the term *Daric*, given to the coins of the Empire. The gold daric weighed one hundred and twenty-four grains Troy, and the silver, two hundred and thirty grains. The value of the first, therefore, was a little over five dollars, and of the second about sixty cents. Thus was the second period in the reign of Darius devoted to the promotion of peace and stable government, as the first had been to the suppression of rebellion.

After nine years devoted thus to affairs of state, the king again, in B. C. 507, took up arms, this time for the enlargement of his

territories. It will be remembered that Cyrus had extended by conquest the eastern borders of the Empire to the valley of the Indus. The ambition of Darius now contemplated the addition of both the Punjab and Sinde to his dominions. He accordingly undertook in person the reduction of the gorgeous East. The expedition was entirely successful, and a vast region, rivaling the valley of the Nile in fertility and the Sacramento in auriferous deposits, was added to the kingdoms won by his great predecessor. Having thus reached a natural barrier on the east, the frozen regions on the north, the sea on the south, there remained for the arms of Persia no other passage to fame than the gateway of the West.

There lay the Hellespont, across which the shores of Europe were easily discerned with the naked eye. All Asia Minor was now an integral part of the Empire. The Persian banner was thus advanced to the coast line of the Ægean. Now came, too, the episode of Democedes, the Greek physician, who, taken prisoner at Sardis, had been sent as a slave to Susa. There he attracted the attention of Darius, whose crippled foot he healed. Afterwards he cured the queen, Atossa, and by her intercession was permitted under a Persian escort to depart to his own country. Thus was brought back to Darius full accounts of the countries as far west as Italy. The king's mind was inflamed with the prospect, and he would have immediately set out for a European invasion but for the presence in the far North-west of that ancient scourge, the Scythians. He felt it necessary, or at any rate desirable, to overawe this savage race before undertaking a work so vast as that which he contemplated in the West. Accordingly he organized an expedition against the Scythians.

He crossed the Euxine; penetrated Thrace; passed the Danube; traversed a vast area of country; struck terror into the barbarians rather by numbers and display than by battle, and returned in safety to his capital. In returning, however, he left in Thrace a division of eighty thousand men under the command of Megabazus, with orders to subdue that country to the authority of Persia. The general was successful in the discharge of his



duty, and carried his conquest from the Propontis to the borders of Macedonia. An embassy was sent into the latter country to demand earth and water, the usual tokens of submission, and Amyntas, the king, acceding to the request, became a vassal of Persia. Alexander the Great will hereafter avenge the humiliation of his country.—Thus was gained an Asiatic foothold on the soil of Europe.

After his return to Susa, Darius dismissed for a while his designs of conquest in the West, and gave himself to the work of adorning his capital. While engaged in this work, however, news came of a revolt which was the immediate precursor of one of the most heroic episodes in the history of the world. The Greek towns of the Ionian and Æolian confederacies along the coasts of Asia Minor had, in common with the rest of the world, fallen under the domination of Persian governors. These rulers were generally despotic and odious to the people. They were regarded as foreign tyrants, and were associated in the public mind with Darius and his government: they were a part of it.

At this time the governor of Miletus was Histæus, who had accompanied the king on his Scythian campaign. He it was who had guarded the bridge over the Danube unheeding the solicitations of treason, and had thus secured for his master those distant parts. With some of the Persian governors, however, he had quarreled, and, being wronged by them, took sides with the anti-Persian party in the city. His son-in-law, Aristagoras, also a prominent leader in Miletus, advanced the daring project of throwing off the Persian yoke. The Ionian and Æolian cities were induced to join in the enterprise. An embassy was sent to Athens as the mother city of Miletus, and she promised to her sorrow to furnish a contingent of twenty ships. Eretria was also solicited, and agreed to furnish five ships. Only the austere Sparta would promise nothing.

Aristagoras returned to Miletus, and in a short time it was determined to strike out boldly and attack Sardis, the capital of Asia Minor. With singular audacity the Greeks proceeded against the city and took it at the

first onset. Artaphernes shut himself up in the citadel. The assailants began to plunder the accumulated treasures, especially those at the shrine of Apollo. A fire broke out, and the greater part of the city was laid in ashes. The news of the daring exploit spread everywhere, and a general uprising, which would have been impossible in any other than a community of Greeks, followed along the whole coast.

It was, however, a deed of rashness rather than bravery. Darius hurried his forces to the West, and the petty principalities gave way before vindictive leadership and weight of numbers. Cyprus, which had been gained by the Greeks, was retaken. The Carians were overcome after a brave resistance. One after another the Ionian and Æolian towns went down before the onslaughts of the Persians. Aristagoras took to flight. Miletus was the last, as she had been the first, of the rebel cities. She made a stubborn defense. The remnants of the Greek armaments assembled to her aid, but were defeated by the Persian fleet. The city fell. Her people were seized and carried away to the shores of the Persian Gulf. What might, under sagacious and unwavering leadership, have been a permanent recovery of independence by the Asiatic Greeks, had ended in smoke and vapor. Besides, there were the insults of Athens and Eretria still to be avenged by a king whose memory rarely failed him in such matters. For fear, however, that vengeance might slumber, a secretary was employed to repeat each morning in the monarch's ear, "Sire, remember Athens."

The king remembered Athens. Determining to proceed at once against that city, he appointed Mardonius, his son-in-law, commander of the expedition, which was to press forward by way of Thrace, Macedonia, and Thessaly into Greece. As a measure preparatory to the campaign, and designed to secure beyond all contingency the loyalty of the Greek towns on the Asiatic coast, Darius now granted to these that very freedom for which they had fought in the recent revolt, dismissed the tyrants which had oppressed them, and conceded to them the right of

democratic government. For the king knew well that such a measure would give employment to the factious temper of the Greek leaders in Ionia and Æolia, and distract their attention wholly from the affairs of their countrymen in the West.

As soon as this change in the government of the coast towns had been effected, Mardonius began his advance through Thrace. At first, opposition melted before him. Thasos, with its rich mines, was taken. Macedonia was obliged to acknowledge her tributary relation to the Empire. Every thing seemed to indicate the speedy reduction of the whole country to complete submersion. But while the Persian fleet was rounding Mount Athos a violent storm arose and sent three hundred triremes and twenty thousand soldiers to the bottom. This disaster was immediately followed by a successful onset made by the Brygi, a tribe of Thracians dwelling between the Strymon and the Axios. These half-barbarians fell upon the Persian land forces by night, killing many and wounding the general. But the veteran Mardonius, by no means dismayed, followed his assailants and compelled them to submit. The injury done to the fleet, however, was so great that the main object of the expedition had to be abandoned: the Persians retreated into Thrace and thence into Asia Minor.

Still Darius remembered Athens. Within two years a second great army was organized and put under command of Datis and Artaphernes. In B. C. 490 they set out to accomplish what Mardonius had failed to do. Avoiding the dangerous route by way of the promontory of Athos, the expedition sailed directly across the Ægean, and passing through the Cyclades came at once upon the objects of its vengeance. Eretria was taken and leveled to the ground. Then came the turn of Athens. Meanwhile, Miltiades, governor of the Thracian Chersonesus, who had accompanied Darius on his expedition against the Scythians, and afterwards broken with the king by taking sides with the revolted Ionian cities, was chosen, with nine other polemarchs, to protect Athens against the Persians. With great skill he gained over his colleagues to agree to a battle. The plain

of MARATHON was selected, and here where the mountains look on the sea was fought that first battle that gave freedom and immortality to the Greek race. The Persians, notwithstanding they outnumbered the Greeks ten to one, having two hundred thousand men, while their opponents could muster but twenty thousand, were disastrously beaten and hurled back in a broken rout upon Asia.<sup>1</sup>

Still Darius remembered Athens. He immediately began preparations on a gigantic scale for subjugation of the audacious Greeks. For three years the whole energies of the Empire were devoted to the organization and equipment of a force sufficiently great to overwhelm not only Greece but the whole of Europe. Never before in history had such stupendous measures been taken to secure the subjugation of a belligerent people. When, however, the preparations were nearly completed, a revolt broke out in Egypt, and the attention of the Persian king was thus for the time distracted by the necessities of a double field of war. His energies, however, rose with the emergency. He determined to lead one army in person, and send the other under trusted generals to put down all opposition. But on the eve of these great movements, the king, in the sixty-third year of his age and the thirty-sixth of his reign, fell sick and died; and the unfinished work of revenge and subjugation was left to Xerxes, his son and successor on the throne of the Empire. Thus ended the career of Darius Hystaspis, noted both in peace and war as one of the greatest sovereigns of the ancient world.

XERXES was not the king's eldest son, but Artabazanes, the eldest, was not "born in the purple,"<sup>2</sup> and so the crown descended to Xerxes, the son of Atossa, he being born

<sup>1</sup> It is deemed best to reserve the full account of the Græco-Persian wars for the following Book, devoted to the History of Greece. It is believed that the more plentiful sources of information accessible from the Greek side of the conflict, and indeed every circumstance would indicate that the fuller narrative of the great struggle should be recited from the Athenian point of view.

<sup>2</sup> "Born in the purple" signifies, in the civil polity of ancient Persia, that the prince to whom the phrase is applied was born *after* his father's accession to the throne.



after his father acceded to the throne. The new sovereign was not slow to take up and prosecute his father's unfinished work. His preference, however, was to punish Egypt rather than to conquer Greece. It is not impossible that, if left to himself, he would have abandoned the Grecian war altogether; but his advisers soon brought him to see that sheer political necessity and a decent respect for the honor of his country required him to subjugate the impudent states of Greece. So it was determined to carry forward with all dispatch the purposes of Darius.

In the mean time, however, in B. C. 485, a revolt broke out in the province of Babylonia, which had to be suppressed before even Egypt could be reduced to submission. Zopyrus, the Babylonian satrap, in attempting to maintain order, was overthrown and killed by the insurgent populace; but Megabyzus, his son, was soon restored to authority, and Babylon paid the penalty by suffering a sack and the plunder of her great temple. The king, as soon as this insurrection was disposed of, proceeded into Egypt and quickly overthrew his rebellious subjects, punishing the leaders and increasing the tribute of the country. This being accomplished, he at last found himself ready to proceed against the Greeks.

It required four years of preparation, however, before every thing was deemed in readiness for the invasion. The failures of the preceding expeditions had forewarned the Persian against the dangers that had precipitated them. It was seen that a sufficient force could not be conveyed directly across the Ægean. Xerxes must rely upon his army rather than his navy, and yet the latter would be necessary in full force. A land march around the long coast line of Thrace and Macedonia would be the only feasible method of pouring Persia upon Greece in overwhelming power. So this route was chosen. All the satraps of the Empire were ordered to prepare their contingents of men and ships, and were stimulated by promises of immense rewards to them who sent to the rendezvous the finest and best armed quotas of troops.

To the states on the coast was committed

the work of equipping the navy, which was to consist of one thousand two hundred triremes and three thousand galleys of smaller size. Storehouses were established on the proposed line of march, and these were filled with untold supplies of corn. Still greater in magnitude was the work of cutting in twain with a ship-canal the isthmus which held Mount Athos to the mainland, which enterprise was deemed essential to the passage of the ships from the Strymonic into the Signitic gulf. Besides this, the Hellespont was to be again spanned with a bridge of boats, as it had been by Darius in his campaign against the Scythians. The bridge of Xerxes, however, was much greater than that built by his father. It was built double—that is, of two rows of boats, over which was laid the immense wooden structure of the bridge proper. The whole was covered with earth and brush-wood, forming a solid causeway from shore to shore, defended on each side by bulwarks. When the work was nearly completed a storm arose, broke the cables, and swept the structure away. For this piece of inefficiency on the part of the builders and of impudence on the part of the elements, the former were put to death and the latter, in their representative, the sea, were properly scourged.

At last, in the spring of 481 B. C., the march began. Forty-nine nations were marshaled under their respective banners. The army numbered eighteen hundred thousand men! Of these there were eighty thousand cavalry and twenty thousand charioteers and camel-riders.<sup>1</sup> Each contingent was armed and equipped after the fashion of the country whence it came. Each had its own commander and its own place in the advance. The whole army was broken into three great divisions. The front column consisted of about one-half of the contingents and the

<sup>1</sup> The method of counting the host, as given by Herodotus, is interesting and amusing. Ten thousand men were first counted and huddled closely together. Around this compact mass a wall was built to the height of a man's waist. The space was then emptied and successively filled until the whole army had been measured. It was found that the infantry filled the inclosure a hundred and seventy times.

baggage. The next division was composed exclusively of Persian soldiers, in the midst of whom the king had his place, with the sacred emblems of authority and religion. Next to the royal person was the famous cohort of ten thousand, called the "Immortals." The third column was made up of the other half of the contingents furnished by the provinces and states of the Empire.

The march was from Susa to Sardis, from Sardis to Abydos. At the latter place a throne was erected on an eminence, from which the king surveyed the country, the sea, and the army. It was such a sight as was never before, never afterwards, witnessed by any potentate of the earth. Herodotus relates that, as the pageant passed before the monarch, he remarked pathetically to Artabanus that in a few years not a man of the immense host would be alive. The lesson of mortality rushed over him, and he gave way to tears.

The Hellespont was crossed in safety, the passage requiring *seven days and nights*. The king, having first prayed and cast a golden goblet into the sea, went in advance, amid myrtle boughs and clouds of incense. Then came the "Immortals," and then the endless stream of soldiers. The march now lay through Thrace. For some distance the advance was through territories already subject to the king, and no opposition was met. The country for a great distance on either hand was eaten up. The first trouble was in the district between the Strymon and the Axios, where it is said that droves of lions came down out of the mountains and killed and ate many of the camels. At Pieria a halt was made, and the king sent ambassadors to all the states of Greece, except Sparta and Athens, demanding earth and water as tokens of submission. Nor was it believed that any would dare refuse.

The replies were favorable from a large number of the states, but others refused. The march was accordingly renewed, and continued without molestation to the PASS OF THERMOPYLÆ. Here, between Callidromus and the sea, was a long, narrow defile, which had been selected by the Greeks as affording

them the most advantageous point of defense on the whole line of the Persian advance. Here were collected the forces of Sparta and Athens, and of a few other states that had determined to stand or fall with their countrymen. The whole body numbered nine thousand men. They were under the polemarch LEONIDAS, of Sparta. His own band numbered only three hundred men; but there were seven hundred Lacedæmonians, one thousand Phocians, one thousand Locrians, seven hundred Thespians, and four hundred Thebans, all of whom were first-class soldiers, skilled in the best discipline of the Greeks. These took possession of the pass and awaited the onset.

After a four days' pause the Persians advanced. The vanguard was beaten back. The Medes and Cissians were sent into the defile and were repulsed. The Immortals were sent forward and were cut to pieces. For two days assault after assault was made upon the invincible Greeks, but to no avail. On the third night, however, the Persians discovered a path over the mountains, gained the lower end of the pass, hemmed in all of the heroes except those—the larger number—who, receiving the news, had preferred to save themselves by flight. The Spartans and some others remained. They attacked the enemy in front, but were pressed back into the narrowest part of the defile. Here they fought till the last man was killed. Twenty thousand of the enemy had fallen, and Xerxes had had a taste of the coming banquet.

As the invading army proceeded into Greece, the Persian fleet kept along the coast as far as the island of Eubœa. Here in three sea-fights, on three successive days, the Greeks, with an armament of only two hundred and seventy-one ships, held their own against their enemy. The Athenian fleet fell back to SALAMIS, where it took a position in the strait between that island and the shore. From this place it was proposed to retire, but the strategy of THEMISTOCLES prevailed, and the Persians having blockaded the strait above and below, that famous battle was fought of which an account will be given in a subsequent Book.<sup>1</sup> The enormous armament of the

<sup>1</sup> See Book Eighth p. 550.



Persians was beaten and scattered to the winds. Five hundred ships were sunk. The sea for miles around was covered with broken galleys and fragments of the general ruin.

Xerxes, who had watched the battle, foresaw the end, and fled for Asia. His retreat was hastily made to the Hellespont, where he found his magnificent bridge swept away by a storm, and was glad to cross to Abydos in an open boat. Mardonius was left behind in Greece with two hundred and sixty thousand men to renew in the following spring the work of subjugation which thus far had wrought the other way.

In the following year, B. C. 480, Mardonius returned to the task. With the opening of spring he marched from Thessaly into Attica, and took possession of Athens. Here he tried diplomacy, and was about to succeed when Sparta, who had been disaffected, reappeared as the ally of the Athenians. Contingents rapidly poured in from the other states until the combined army of the Greeks numbered one hundred and eight thousand men. Mardonius had now three times that number. The two great forces met in a death struggle on the memorable field of *PLATEA*, where the discomfiture of the Persians was so complete and overwhelming as to destroy at once and forever all thoughts of renewing the contest by the enemies of Greece.<sup>1</sup> The tremendous avalanche which had rolled with such crushing weight upon the devoted commonwealths of the Hellenes had melted into vapor, and the skies were as blue as before.

In a short time after the battle of Platea, Thrace, Macedonia, and Pæonia recovered their independence, and the borders of the Persian Empire were contracted to the *Ægean* and the Hellespont. Not only did the Greeks beat back the invasion, but they followed up their advantage and recovered and restored to independence all the islands of the Propontis and the *Ægean*, which had hitherto belonged to Persia. They landed a force on the coast of Asia Minor, defeated sixty thousand Persians at Mycalé, and destroyed the remnants of the fleet which had escaped from Salamis.

<sup>1</sup> For full account of the battle of Platea, see Book Eighth, pp. 553, 554.

Nor is it to be questioned that if the Greek states had stood together in the great cause of emancipation and had resolutely followed up with blow on blow the work they had begun, the whole of the Greek confederations on the shores of Asia Minor would have been liberated from foreign domination. Political dissensions, however, prevailed among the Grecian commonwealths, and the extension of freedom stopped with the Cyclades.

After the subsidence of his ill-fated wars, Xerxes abandoned himself to his court. It was a licentious turmoil, which ended presently in tragedy. The seraglio system had begun to bear its evil fruits in the destruction of virtue and the establishment of intrigue and blood-cruelty. Xerxes himself had been but once married; but instead of the lawful abandonment of the harem he entered into criminal relations with the princesses of his court, thus provoking the jealous rage of the queen, Amestris. A band of enemies thus arose around him, and finally a conspiracy was formed, whose leaders, Artabanus and Aspamitres, entered the king's chamber and murdered him. He had reigned for twenty years, and though the Empire under his dominion had suffered little positive reduction, yet great disasters had lowered the reputation of the Persian arms, and social and domestic broils, ending in assassination, had disgraced the annals of the nations.

Of the three sons of Xerxes, the eldest, Darius, was, at the instigation of Artabanus and on the false charge of having killed the late king, put to death by the youngest, Artaxerxes. The other son, Hystaspes, who held the office of satrap of Bactria, and was absent from the court, was unable to prevent either the crime of his brother's death or the usurpation of ARTAXERXES, who at once, B. C. 465, took the throne. Hystaspes, taking up arms to maintain his own right to the Empire, was overthrown in two battles by the forces of Artaxerxes.

Five years after the death of Xerxes another revolt broke out in Egypt. The leaders were a Libyan chief named Inarus and a native Egyptian named Amyrtacus. To their aid came an Athenian fleet of two hun-

dred vessels, and the Persians were defeated in several engagements. Memphis was taken by the insurgents and held until the arrival of a large Persian army under Megabyzus, who overwhelmed the rebels, retook Memphis, and destroyed the Athenian fleet. Inarus was crucified.

Athens, smarting under her reverse, equipped another fleet of two hundred sail and sent it under Cimon against Cyprus, a dependency of Persia. He began a siege of Citium, but died soon afterwards, and the siege was abandoned. The fleet then sailed to Salamis, and there falling in with a Phœnician squadron of three hundred ships, captured or dispersed the whole. Artaxerxes, alarmed at the condition of affairs, sought peace, and the same—known as the “Peace of Callias”—was agreed to on condition that Cyprus should remain to the king, but that all the Greek cities of Asia Minor should be granted their freedom. The Mediterranean was divided by a line running north and south through Phaselis. Persian war-ships should not pass to the west of that line, or Greek ships to the east. Thus after a struggle of fifty years (from B. C. 499 to 449) was ended the first great conflict between the Greeks and the Persians.

A short time after the conclusion of peace the tranquillity of the Empire was broken by a revolt in Syria. The leader was that same Megabyzus who had recently suppressed the insurrection in Egypt. Against his positive promise the rebel Inarus had been put to death by the king. Megabyzus was incensed and took up arms in his own satrapy, and the revolt was so successful that Artaxerxes was presently obliged to treat with the insurgents, and to grant them honorable terms of reconciliation. It was the first time since the days of Cyrus that the majesty of Persia had been successfully defied by a provincial governor—a fatal precedent for the future of the Empire.

In the years that followed the treaty of peace with the Greeks there were several petty rebellions, but none of them of a magnitude to endanger the general tranquillity. Samos took up arms in 440, on account of the bad faith of the satrap of Sardis, but was

soon pacified. The provinces of Lycia and Caria, under the leadership of Zopyrus, raised the standard of insurrection, and some of the Greek states were on the eve of lending aid to the insurgents, but were prevented from doing so by local dissensions among themselves. Artaxerxes saw with satisfaction that the political broils of Greece were sufficient to prevent any formidable aggression from that quarter. The Lycians and Carians, left without support, were soon brought into submission.

Artaxerxes was without great strength of character. His mother, Amestris—she of the evil mind—and Amytis, his sister, exercised an undue influence in the affairs of government. The administration was thus in a good measure given up to spite and caprice. The king himself was of a gentle and unwarlike disposition, and was incapable of great actions either in the field or court. No conquests for the enlargement of the Empire were planned, no important expeditions undertaken, during his reign. He occupied the throne for twenty-four years, and dying in B. C. 425, left his crown to his only legitimate heir, XERXES II., son of the queen Dampasia.

There were, however, seventeen other sons of the late king, who had for their mothers various concubines belonging to the court. Some of these were ambitious, and one of them, named SOGDIANUS, taking advantage of the half-drunken condition of Xerxes at a feast, murdered him, only forty-five days after his accession. The assassin took the throne, but in a few months another half-brother, named Ochus, following the bloody method of Sogdianus, killed him and took the throne under the title of DARIUS NOTHUS. He had held the satrapy of Hyrcania during the life of Artaxerxes, and had married his aunt, Parysatis, a daughter of Xerxes the Great. By her he had a son, Arsaces, afterwards known as Artaxerxes II. The reign of Nothus lasted for nineteen years (B. C. 426–407), and was almost wholly occupied with rebellions in the satrapies and imbroglios with the Greeks. The first insurrection was raised by his brother, Arsites, and that same Mega-



byzus who had been previously at the head of the Syrian revolt. For a while the insurgents, aided by a large force of Greek mercenaries, were successful, and not until these foreign auxiliaries had been corrupted with Persian gold were the king's forces able to reduce the rest to submission. Terms were granted to Arsites, but the queen induced the king to break his word of faith, and the rebel brother was put to death.

The next insurrection broke out in Lydia. Pissuthnes, the satrap of that province, was a member of the royal family. With the re-accumulated wealth of Sardis, he hired a large contingent of Greeks, who were now known to be the best soldiers in the world—unconquerable save by bribery. This was the weapon now employed against them. Tissaphernes, the Persian general who was sent against them, used the gold of his master, and Lycon, the Greek commander, yielded to the temptation, went over with his men to the king, and left the rebellious satrap to the mercy of the winds. Again were terms of surrender granted, only to be violated when Pissuthnes was taken a prisoner to Susa, and executed in defiance of all honor. Soon afterwards, however, Amorges, a son of Pissuthnes, renewed the struggle, and was able to hold out against Tissaphernes for several years.

Meanwhile, the commonwealth of Athens had been engaged in her great and disastrous campaign against Sicily. In that island she had suffered an overthrow so complete as to leave her prostrate. When the knowledge of this ruin of the ancient rival of her country was borne to Darius he at once ordered the satraps Tissaphernes and Pharnabazus to begin the exaction of tribute from the Greek cities of Asia Minor as of old. This edict was in direct violation of the Peace of Callias, but Persian faith was dead, and the action was regarded as a matter of course. To produce dissension among the Greeks themselves a tempting offer was made to Sparta, and by her accepted, to enter into an alliance with Persia. She who at Thermopylæ had cut down her thousands now leagued herself with the foes of liberty.

Thus a new war broke out between the Persians and the Greeks. But it was no longer necessary for Darius and his successors to bear down with immense armaments upon the West, since either Athens or Sparta—embittered by their own long continued internecine strife—could always be secured against the other by bribery. The court of Susa was able to gain and to maintain among the powers of Greece an ascendancy which was not seriously impaired until the petty states of that distracted country went down before the ambition of Alexander. Such was the condition of affairs during the latter years of the reign of Darius Nothus. That monarch died in the year B. C. 407, and was succeeded by Arsaces with the title of Artaxerxes II. He had not been "born in the purple," and his right to the throne was to that extent endangered.

Before the death of the late king, the question of the succession had been raised by Parysatis, the queen, who preferred her younger son, Cyrus. This preference was intensified by the fact that this prince had been born after his father became king, and was, therefore, under the old precedent, the rightful heir. Nevertheless, Darius named ARTAXERXES for his successor and the latter became king, not, however, until his life had been attempted by Cyrus on the day of coronation.

The latter was arrested and was about to be put to death, but his mother interceded for him and he was sent away to his satrapy in Asia Minor, burning for revenge. He immediately began the organization of a body of Greek mercenaries, for the ostensible purpose of making war on the Pisidians of the Western Taurus, but with the real object of killing his brother, the king, and taking the throne of Persia.

By various maneuvers and subterfuges he succeeded in collecting eleven thousand Greek soldiers. He put himself at the head of this army, which was soon augmented by two thousand additional Greeks and nearly one hundred thousand provincials gathered from his satrapy, and began his advance from Sardis through Lydia and Phrygia. Tissaphernes, in the meantime, had carried the tidings to

Susa and given the alarm to the king, who readily perceived that he was the object of the expedition. It was not, however, until Cyrus had penetrated Cilicia that the mask was thrown off and his real intentions divulged to the soldiery.

The Greeks at first refused to proceed, but were gradually won over to the project. The advance was resumed, and after a twenty-nine days' march from Tarsus the army reached Thapsacus, on the Euphrates. The river was forded, but not until the Greeks had again

recovered himself, and put his army in array of battle. Within three hours after the first sight of the Persian host was caught, the conflict began. The Greek auxiliaries were placed on the right center, and were the main dependence of Cyrus in the battle. The forces of Artaxerxes were so vast as to outflank the invaders on both wings, but Cyrus prevented this by resting his right against the river. The Greeks began the fight by singing a pæan to Zeus and then charging the foe. The Persians gave way before them. The



BATTLE OF CUNAXA.

been stimulated with a promise of additional pay. The course now lay down the left bank of the Euphrates, and after thirty-three days Cyrus came within one hundred and twenty miles of Babylon, where the first traces of the enemy were seen. After that the advance was made each day with slowness and caution.

In the meantime, Artaxerxes, fully aroused, had raised a force of nine hundred thousand men, and was advancing to the onset. At last the two armies came in sight on the famous field of CUNAXA. Cyrus had believed that his brother was fleeing before him, and came near being surprised; but he quickly

seythe-bearing chariots were turned by their frightened horses upon their own ranks. For three miles the Greeks scattered all before them. In the center, meanwhile, Cyrus engaged his foe and gained some advantages. Finally a charge was made against the six thousand horsemen who composed the body-guard of the king, and they were put to flight. In the confused struggle in this part of the field Cyrus discerned at a distance the form of his brother, and shouting out, "TOR ANDRA HORO" (I see the man), made a rash plunge in that direction to cut him down. But before he could reach Artaxerxes he was



himself struck with a javelin and slain. As the whole question was merely whether his life or that of the king should bleed on the altar of fraternal vengeance, the fight was virtually decided. The provincial forces that made up the body of Cyrus's army broke and fled. But the Greeks stood fast, and though their captains were soon inveigled into a conference and treacherously killed, they began to recede in good order, with the hope of reaching their own country.

Now it was that the famous "Retreat of the Ten Thousand" began, under the leadership of Xenophon. The hosts of the Persians hung upon their flanks and rear, but discipline and courage kept their myriads at bay, and after untold hardships and a march of many hundred miles through Mesopotamia and the mountainous regions of Armenia to Trapezus on the Euxine, the heroic Greeks at last came in safety, and by their exultant cry of "THE SEA! THE SEA!" gave proof to after times of the valor and fortitude of their race.<sup>1</sup>

The mercenaries who had thus aided Cyrus in his attempt on the throne were mostly Spartans. Their conduct gave grounds to the king for going to war with their country; for their country would not disavow what its soldiery had done. For six years (B. C. 399–394) a desultory conflict was carried on between the satraps of Lydia and Phrygia on the one side and Sparta on the other. In the year B. C. 393 a league was formed by Argos, Thebes, Athens, and Corinth, which compelled the Spartans to withdraw from foreign complications and defend themselves at home. In the straitened condition of their oligarchy they undertook and were finally able to secure the establishment of peace. The general proposal was that all of Asia should go to the Persians, and that all of the Greek islands and states should be free. For six years the negotiations were pending, but finally, in B. C. 387, the terms were acceded to by all the parties and the "Peace of Antalcidas" was

established. In the mean time a revolt broke out in Cyprus, led by the Greek governor Evagoras, who beat off the forces sent against him and achieved a nominal independence. In the remaining years of the reign of Artaxerxes a series of rebellions occurred in the outlying provinces, the existence of which and the success of some indicated as clearly as daylight the moribund condition of the Empire.

After a long reign of forty-six years Artaxerxes died, and was succeeded by Ochus, who, with the connivance and aid of Parysatis, had first cleared the field of claimants by the murder of all his brothers and rivals. The bloody road by which he went to the throne was not more bloody than the scepter which he wielded. As soon as he was king he instigated a series of murders by which nearly all the princes and a large number of princesses were destroyed. The next matter to which he turned his attention was the reconquest of Egypt, which now for about fifty years had held a nominal independence. At the head of a great army Ochus marched into the Nile valley, where he was met and signally defeated by the Pharaoh Nectanebo.

Immediately after this a revolt broke out in Phœnicia, and the ancient city of Sidon recovered her independence. But Ochus, in the midst of what seemed universal dismemberment, was undismayed. He reorganized an immense army, consisting of three hundred and thirty thousand men, and again advanced into Egypt. This time Nectanebo was routed in a series of battles, and was finally driven into Ethiopia. Sidon was also besieged. All who came out to ask for terms were put to death. Finally, in the wretchedness of despair, the remaining forty thousand people set fire to their own houses and perished in the flames. Ochus coolly sold the ashes of the city to a company of adventurers, who hoped to gather from the ruin the gold and ornaments of the people. Such was the vindictive energy and relentless severity of Ochus that the terror of his name spread throughout the Empire and raised the king to the pinnacle of autocratic power. Rebellions, for the time, became few and far between.

<sup>1</sup> There is little doubt that the exploit of these Ten Thousand Greeks in penetrating to the heart of the Persian Empire and then returning in safety, furnished Alexander with a precedent for his conquest.





THE RETURN OF THE TEN THOUSAND UNDER XENOPHON.

Drawn by H. Vogel.



It was at this epoch in the history of Persia that her attention was first directed to MACEDONIA. That State was rapidly rising to influence in the West, and the king directed his governors to take steps to check her progress. An army was sent into Thrace, in B. C. 340, to help to sustain the independence of that kingdom against the Macedonians, and succor was given to the people of Perinthus, then besieged by Philip. But the career of Ochus was near an end. In B. C. 338 he was poisoned by a conspirator named Bogôas, who set up ARSES, one of the king's sons, and slew all the rest—thus hoping to be virtually monarch himself. But very soon Arses began to show signs of restiveness and courage, and he and his children were all in turn assassinated. Bogôas, who thus acquired a kind of character of king-maker, next elevated CODO-MANUS, a remote member of the royal house, to the throne. He took to himself the title of DARIUS. In this same year (B. C. 336), Philip of Macedon was assassinated by Pausanias, and the crown of that country descended to the youthful ALEXANDER. Thus, at the same time, in two distant countries, were established in power two foemen who should presently contend for the mastery of the world.

The story of the growth of the Macedonian power and the hurling of that power like a thunderbolt upon the effete kingdoms of Mesopotamia will be fully narrated in the Eighth Book.<sup>1</sup> For the present it may suffice to recount from the Persian side the tragic end of the great Empire of the Achæmenians. Personally considered, Darius Codomanus was one of the best of the whole line of kings who swayed the destinies of his country. His appearance on the stage, however, was at an epoch when fate was against him. At the very time of his accession a division of the Macedonian army had already been landed by Philip on the Asiatic coast. But for the death of the king of Macedonia the disasters of Persia must have sooner come, nor borne less heavily. The assassination of Philip gave a brief respite to Darius, who, however, little improved the interval with measures to repel

the threatened invasion. It was doubted whether the youthful Alexander could even maintain himself in Europe, to say nothing of an Asiatic conquest. But when it was seen that a greater than Philip was come, then the king made such preparations as he could to stop the avalanche. A numerous fleet was manned and equipped. Large bodies of troops were sent from beyond the Euphrates to the frontiers of Asia Minor. Mercenaries were hired. Agents were dispatched into the Greek states to stir up revolts. The Hellespontine Greeks were organized in the pay of Persia,



DARIUS CODOMANUS IN THE BATTLE OF ISSUS.  
After the Fresco in Pompeii.

and were put under the command of Memnon of Rhodes, an able general.

By these measures some brief advantages were gained on the Hellespont, nor, for the time, did the movements of Alexander excite serious apprehensions. So in the beginning of his expedition, in the spring of B. C. 334, his passage into Asia was not disputed. His force consisted of thirty thousand foot and five thousand horse. With this small but compact and well-disciplined army he advanced to Mysia without opposition. The Persians were first arrayed in his pathway at the GRANICUS, a small stream between Abydos and Dascyleium. With forty thousand men advantageously posted on the opposite bank

<sup>1</sup> See Book Ninth, pp. 616-663.





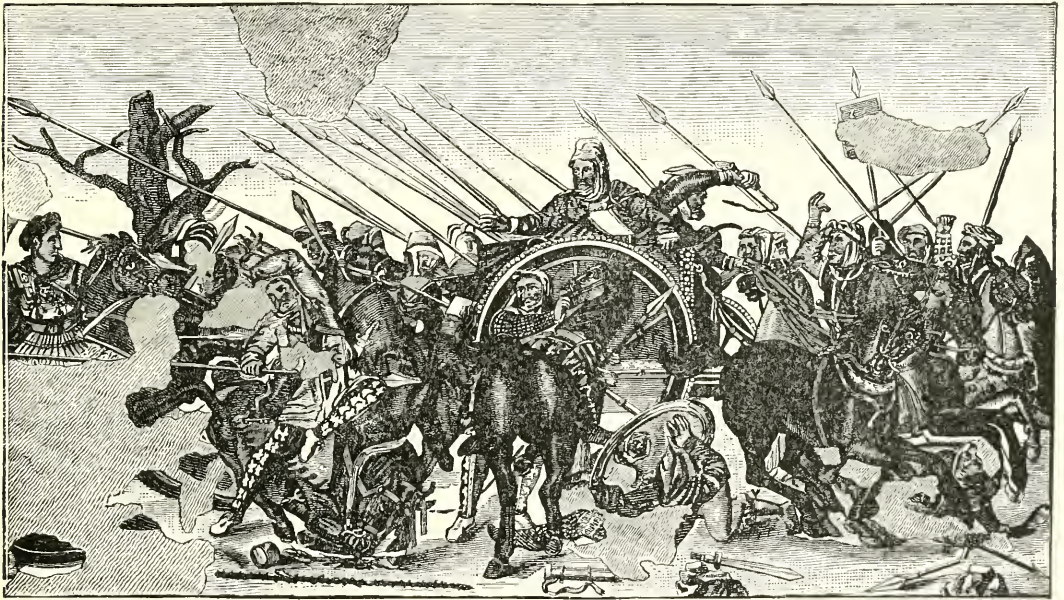
VICTORY OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT ON THE GRANICUS.  
After the painting by Ch. Lebrun, Louvre, Paris.



they awaited the coming of the Macedonian, who gladly caught a first sight of his Asiatic adversaries, and immediately charged through the stream and up the bank in the face of the enemy. The battle was stubbornly contested, especially by the Greek mercenaries in the Persian army. But the Macedonians carried the field, slaying more than one-half of the whole opposing force. Alexander himself displayed an almost reckless daring, and was slightly wounded in the battle. The Macedonian dead numbered scarcely more than a hundred.

At the head of this force, in the spring of B. C. 333, the king set out from Babylon, advanced first to Sochi, and thence to Issus, on the gulf of the same name. He thus attained a position somewhat in Alexander's rear; for the latter had been sick at Tarsus, and was unable to act with celerity in the early season. Nevertheless, he immediately, on hearing the place of his adversary, turned about and advanced upon him.

Darius, in the mean time, had become impatient and set out from Issus to find the Macedonians; but he had only to advance a



THE BATTLE OF ISSUS.

From a Fresco in Pompeii.

All of Asia Minor now lay open to the conqueror. Lydia, Ionia, Caria, Lycia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Phrygia were successively overrun, and all of the great cities from Miletus to Gordium fell into his hands. At the last named city he established his winter-quarters and awaited the coming of spring. A single campaign had laid Asia Minor at his feet.

Meanwhile, Memnon, the general upon whom Darius chiefly depended, died, and the king was driven to act merely on the defensive. He determined, however, to meet his antagonist well to the west, and organized a vast army of nearly a half-million of men.

short distance to find the objects of his search. In November the two armies met on the banks of the Pinarus, but the battle takes its name from Issus.

The conflict was begun by Alexander. From the beginning it was seen that the Persians feared the long spears of the Macedonians; but the cavalry of Darius fought with great bravery, as did also the Greek mercenaries in the right wing of the army. Alexander himself with the right and the right center charged the Persian infantry in his front and routed them with great slaughter. The cavalry, seeing the defeat of the foot, also broke into flight, and the Greek auxilia-

ries were beaten down. The result was a complete and overwhelming victory for Alexander, who now grew confident of his ability to take the Persian Empire with a Macedonian phalanx. The losses of Darius in the battle of Issus have been placed as high as one hundred thousand men, while that of the Macedonians amounted to no more than nine hundred and fifty in killed and wounded! To this disparity must be added the loss of the king's mother, wife, and sister, who were captured by Alexander.

The contest, however, was not yet decided. The resources of the Empire were so vast as not to be exhausted by a single overthrow. It was, moreover, Alexander's plan, as soon as he had inflicted a signal defeat upon the main army of Persia, to turn about into Phœnicia and reduce that country and Egypt before proceeding to Babylon. He thus purposed, by bringing all the countries from Syria to Libya under his sway, to leave no disturbing elements behind him when he should continue his march to the East. The great conquests of the son of Philip in the countries skirting the Mediterranean, his triumphant progress to the south-west, his penetration to the Oasis of Amun, and his return into Asia Minor preparatory to his final struggle with Darius, will be properly considered in the History of the Macedonian ascendancy.<sup>1</sup> These movements occupied a period of twenty months, so that the summer of B. C. 331 arrived before the conflict was renewed for the dominion of Asia.

In the mean time the Persian king made great preparations for the renewal of hostilities. First, however, he tried what negotiation could accomplish by sending two embassies to the conqueror. To the first, which requested peace and the surrender of the king's family, now held prisoners, Alexander replied haughtily, demanding either an abdication of Darius in his favor or else that the monarch would come forth and fight it out. To the other proposition which was made to the Macedonian while he was engaged in the siege of Tyre, and which embraced the giving of ten thousand talents for the restitution of the royal family, the surrender to Alexander

of all the countries west of the Euphrates, and his reception of Statira, the king's daughter, in marriage, he answered still more contemptuously. The countries were his already. When he wanted the ten thousand talents he would take them. If he desired to marry the daughter of Darius he would do so as soon as he pleased. The Persian was a fool to offer him what he already possessed. So it only remained to fight and—he beaten.

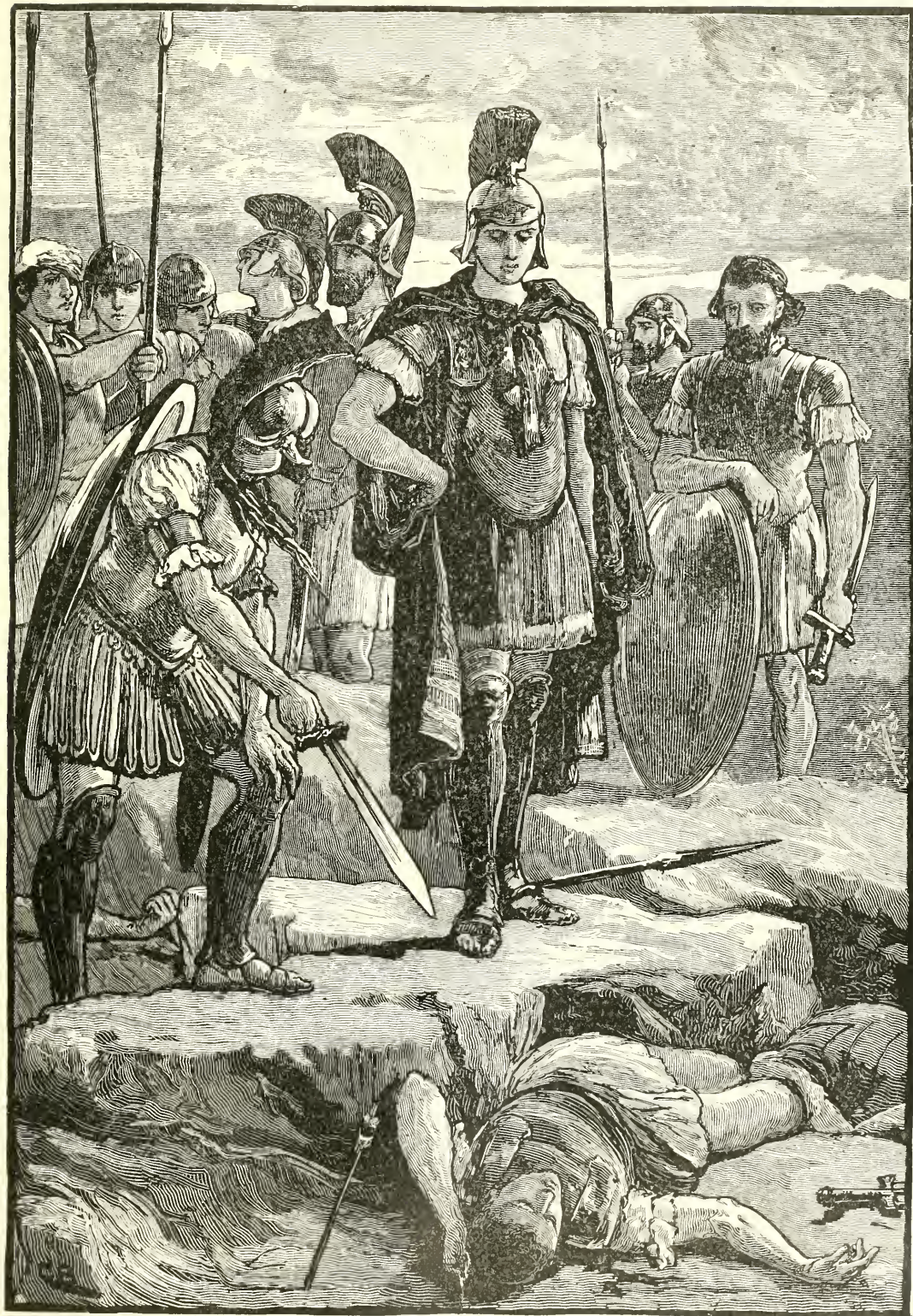
The whole Empire was laid under contribution for the final conflict. Twenty-five nations furnished large contingents of troops. More than a million of men were gathered under the king's standards. For once a field of battle was deliberately selected. In the heart of ancient Assyria, about thirty miles from Nineveh, in a vast plain as level as the lowlands of Mesopotamia, in every way adapted for the advantageous operations of a great mass of men, and especially for the evolutions of the scythe-bearing war-chariots, Darius marshaled his hosts. The plain was improved with special respect to the battle. Every impediment was taken away. Finally, in all that quarter from which the Macedonian cavalry must make their charge, the ground was sown with spiked balls of iron to cripple the enemy's horses. Such was the field of ARBELA.

On came Alexander from his campaign in Egypt. He advanced through Syria, crossed the Euphrates, traversed Mesopotamia, and entered Assyria without resistance. It was now October of B. C. 331. Darius carefully occupied his chosen position. The scythe-bearing chariots were placed in front. Then came the Scythian, Bactrian, Armenian, and Cappadocian cavalry. After these were the great masses of infantry, arranged in two wings, and after all, the Babylonian reserve massed in the rear. The king took his post in the center and awaited the onset. About him were arranged body-guards of archers and cavalry, and a troop of elephants mounted and directed by their Indian masters.

Alexander went into the conflict with great care. From deserters he learned the exact disposition of his enemy's forces. On the margin of the battle-field he paused over

<sup>1</sup> See Book Ninth, pp. 629-651.





ALEXANDER DISCOVERS THE BODY OF DARIUS.



night, counseling his generals, and reconnoitering the grounds occupied by Darius. His own forces consisted of forty thousand foot and seven thousand horse—these against a million! Light-armed troops were deployed by the Macedonian to operate against the Persian chariots. Then came the heavy lines of battle. Alexander commanded the right; Parmenio, the left. In beginning battle the conqueror charged diagonally across the field and greatly disconcerted the Persians. Darius ordered his chariots into battle; but the charioteers were soon brought down by the agile skirmishers, and the few vehicles which reached the battle-lines were allowed to pass through without harm only to be overthrown in the rear. Alexander, meanwhile, had reached the Persian flank, and discovering a gap in the left wing, he plunged into it like an avalanche. He soon fought his way into the immediate vicinity of Darius, and himself hurled a lance which brought down the king's charioteer. The cry at once spread that Darius was slain. Then came the rout. The lines broke. The banner of the Empire hung

suspended for a moment; then fluttered; then fell never to rise. The king fled to Arbela.<sup>1</sup> The field was a turmoil of struggling, flying cohorts. The remnants of the Persian host rolled across the Zab; but before they reached safety on the other side, the Macedonians had destroyed three hundred thousand men! The victory was overwhelming, astounding, the very crack of doom to that great power which had so long overshadowed Western Asia. Darius was pursued to Arbela, thence through Rhagæ to the Elburz mountains, and thence to the deserts of Parthia. Here he was assassinated by Bessus, the satrap of Bactria. He was discovered by Alexander in a dying condition by the roadside. He asked for a cup of water, thanked the giver, and died. And with him died the Empire of the Persians. The body of the dead monarch was sent by Alexander to Persepolis, where it was honorably buried in the tombs of the kings.

<sup>1</sup>The great battle which takes the name of Arbela was fought on the other side of the river Zab, at the little village of Gaugamela, and should have been so named.

